A

RECORD

OF

Ancient Hiſtoryes,

Entituled in Latine,

Geſta Romanorum.

Diſcourſing of ſundry Examples, for the advancement of Vertue, and the abandoning of Vice.

Very pleaſant in Reading, and profitable in Practice.

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THE HISTORY OF *Gesta Romanorum.*

The Argument.

Mans Soul is dearly beloved of God the Father. And yet for sundry good graces she is tempted of the Devil by three divers means, at three several Ages in this mortal life: if she resist and overcome the same, she is hereby adopted to the fruition of matrimonial joy in Heaven, with Christ the Son of God.

The first History.

SOmetimes there dwelt in Rome a mighty Emperor which had a fair creature to his Daughter, named Atalana whom divers great Lords, and many Noble knights desired to have to Wife. This Atalana was wondrous swift of foot: wherefore such a Law was made, that no man could have her to Wife, except he could outrun her, and take her by swiftness of foot. It befell, that many came to run with her,

but could not overtake her. At the laſt there came a Knight named Pomeis unto her Father, & ſaid to him: My Lord, if it pleaſe you to give me your daughter to wife I wil run with her. Then ſaid her Father, there is a Law made, that whoſoever wil have her to wife, muſt firſt run with her, and if he overtake her not, he ſhal loſe his head, and if he overtake her, then ſhall I Wed her vnto him.

And when the Emperor had told him all the peril that might fall in the winning of her, the Knight voluntarily granted for to abide that jeopardy Then the Knight provided him three balls of Gold againſt the running. And when they had begun to rnn a litle ſpace, the young Lady over run him: then the Knight threw forth before her the firſt ball of gold, when the damſel ſaw the ball, ſhe ſtooped, and took it up, and in the mean while the Knight gat before her, but that prevailed little, for when ſhe perceived it, ſhe ran ſo faſt, that in ſhort ſpace ſhe got before him again. And then he threw forth the ſecond ball of gold, ſhe ſtooped as ſhe did before & took it up, & ſo that while the knight got before her again which this young damſel ſeing, conſtrained her ſelf, and ran ſo faſt that ſhe ſoon had him at advantage again, and was before him: and by that time they were nighthe mark, whereby they ſhould abide, wherefore the Knight

threw forth the third ball before her, and she stoped down to take up the ball, and while she was taking up the third ball, the Knight got before her, and was first at the mark, & thus was she won.

The Moral.

By this Emperor is understood the Father of Heaven & by the Damsel is understood the soul of man, with whom many Devils desire to run and deceive her through their temptations, but she withstandeth them mightily, and overcometh them. And when he hath done his worst and may not speed, then makes he three balls of Gold, and casteth them before in three ages of man, that is to say, in youth, in manhood, and in old age. In youth the Devil casteth the ball of letchery before her, that is to say, the desire of the flesh: nevertheless, for all this ball, oftentimes man overcometh the Devil by acknowledging of his sins to God, by hearty Repentance and amendment of life. The second ball is the ball of Pride, the which the Devil casteth to man in his manhood, that is to say, in his middle age but this ball man oft-times overcometh as he did the first, but let him beware of the third ball, which is covetousnes, that the Devil casteth to man in his old age, which is dreadful: for except a man may overcome this bal, with the other two, he shall

lose his Honor, that is to say, the Kingdom of Heaven. For when a man burneth in covetousness, he thinketh not only Ghostly riches, (for ever his heart is set on worldly goods) and reckoneth not of prayers, nor of well doing, and thus loseth he his Heritage, to the which God hath bought him with his precious blood? unto the which our Lord Jesus bring us all. Amen.

The Argument.

As God allotteth divers men divers callings and estates of living in this World, so is every man tried by the rule of Life and Doctrines, whether his practice agree with his profession, in profiting himself without prejudice to others, wherein if he so hold himself content, for such a Son the Heavenly Father hath planted a Tree of Heavenly Treasure; in the Life that shall be everlasting.

The Second History.

THere reigned sometime in Rome a wise and mighty Emperor, named Anselm, who did bear in his Arms a Shield of Silver with five red Roses: this Emperor had three Sons whom he loved much: He had also continual war with the King of Egypt, in which War he lost all his temporal goods, except a precious Tree. It fortuned after on a day, that he gave battel to the same K. of Egypt wherein he was grievously wounded, nevertheless he obtained the victory, notwithstanding

ng he had his deadly wound: wherefore while he lay at point of death, he called unto his eldest son, and said: My dear and well beloved son, all my temporal riches are spent, and almost nothing is left me, but a precious Tree, the which stands in the midst of my Empire: I give to thee all that is under the earth, and above the earth of the same tree, O my reverend Father (quoth he) I thank you much.

Then said the Emperor call to me my second Son. Anon the eldest son greatly joying of his Fathers gift called in his Brother, and when he came the Emperor said: my dear son I may not make my Testament, forasmuch as I have spent all my goods, except a Tree which standeth in the midst of mine Empire, of the which tree, I bequeath to thee all that is great and small. Then answered he, & said: My reverend Father, I thank you much.

Then said the Emperor call to me my third Son, and so it was done. And when he was come, the Emperor said: My dear son, I must die of these wounds, & I have only a precious tree, of which I have given thy brethren their portion and to thee I bequeath thy portion: for I will that thou have of the said tree all that is wet and dry. Then said his Son: Father I thank you. Soon after the Emperor had made his bequest, he dyed. And shortly after the eldest son took possession of the tree.

Now

Now when the ſecond Son heard this, he came to him, ſaying: my brother, by what law or title occupy you this Tree? Dear brother, quoth he, I occupy it by this Title, my Father gave me all that is under the earth, and above of the ſaid Tree, by reaſon thereof the Tree is mine? Unknowing to thee quoth the ſecond Brother, he gave unto me all that is great and ſmall of the ſaid tree, and therefore I have as great right in the tree as you. This hearing the third ſon, he came to them and ſaid. My well beloved brethren it behoveth you not to ſtrive for this Tree, for I have as much right in the tree as ye, for by the law ye wot, that the laſt Will & Teſtament ought to ſtand, for of truth he gave me of the ſaid tree all that is wet and dry, and therefore the Tree by right is mine: but for as much as your words are of great force, and mine alſo, my counſel is, that we be judged by reaſon: for it is not good nor commendable that ſtrife or diſſention ſhould be among us. Here beſide dwelleth a King full of reaſon, therefore to avoid ſtrife let us go to him, and each of us lay his right before him, & as he ſhall judge let us ſtand to his judgement: then ſaid his Brethren thy counſel is good, wherefore they went all three unto the King of Reaſon, and each of them ſeverally ſhewed forth his right unto him, as it is ſaid before.

When

When the King had heard the Titles, he rehearsed them all again severally: first, saying to the eldest Son, thus: you say (qd. the King) that your Father gave you all that is under the earth and above the earth, of the said Tree. And to the second Brother he bequeathed all that is great and small of that Tree. And to the third Brother he gave all that is wet and dry.

And with that he laid the Law to them, and said, that this Will ought to stand.

Now my dear friends, briefly I shall satisfie all your requests: and when he had thus said, he turned him unto the eldest Brother, saying: My deare friend, if you list to abide the Judgment of right, it behoveth you to be letten blood of the right arm. My Lord, (quoth he) your will shall be done. Then the King called for a discreet Physitian, commanding him to let him blood.

When the eldest Son was thus letten blood, the King said unto them all three: My dear friends, Where is your father buried? then answered they and said: forsooth my Lord, in such a place. Anon the King commanded to dig in the ground for the body, and to take a bone out of his breast, and to bury the body again: and so it was done. And when the bone was taken out, the King commanded that it should be laid in the blood of the elder

Brother,

brother, and it ſhould lie till it had receiued kindly the blood, and then to be laid in the Sun and dried, & after that it ſhould be waſht with clear water: his Seruants fulfilled all that he had commanded: and when they began to waſh, the blood vaniſhed clean away, when the King ſaw this, he ſaid to the ſecond ſon, it behoueth that thou be letten blood as thy Brother was. Then ſaid he: My Lords will ſhall be fulfilled, and anon he was done unto like as his brother was in all things, and when they began to waſh the bone, the blood vaniſhed away. Then ſaid the King to the third Son, it behoueth thée to be letten blood likewiſe; He anſwered and ſaid: My Lord it pleaſeth me well ſo to be. When the youngeſt Brother was letten blood, and done unto in all things as his two brethren were before, then the Kings Seruants began to waſh the bone, but neither for waſhing nor rubbing might they do away the blood of the bone, but it euer appeared bloody; when the King ſaw this, he ſaid: it appeareth openly now that this blood is of the nature of the bone, thou art his true Son, & the other two are Baſtards, I judge thée the trée for euermore.

The Moral.

Dear friends, this Emperor betokeneth our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, which bare a Shield

of

of silver with five red Roses, that is his body that is so fair, so clear, and more radient than any silver, according to the Psalmest: Speciosus furma præ filiis hominum, that is, He was more fair than all the Children of men. By the five red Roses we understand his five wounds which he suffered for mankind. And by the King of Egypt we understand the Devil, against whom he fought all the time of his life, and at the last he was slain for mankind. Nevertheless before his death, he made his Testament to his three Sons.

By the first, to whom he gave of the tree, all that was under the earth, and above the earth, we understand such mighty men, and others of all Estates in this World, as are not content with their callings, seek ambitiously the subvertion of others, to magnifie and exalt themselves. By the second Son to whom he gave all the tree that was great and small, we understand, such worldly wise men, in this world, which in their subtilty atempt to win or lose all. By the third son, to whom he gave all that was wet and dry of the tree; we understand every good Christian Prince, Nobleman, Majestrate, or meaner person in every Common-wealth wheresoever, which (eschewing all ambition and covetousnes) holding himself content with the providence of God; and in his own calling, laboureth truely

truely to do good unto all men; yea, though himself sustain injuries, suffering no solace then care, no riches, then poverty; yet receiveth all this thankfully, to have this precious Tree thus bequeath unto them. This Tree is the Tree of Paradise, that is everlasting joy which is given to us all if we take it thankfully. This every man obtaineth not, therefore it behoveth them to go to the King of Reason, that is, unto the Father of Heaven who knoweth all things. The first Son was let blood, and in his blood the bone was laid. By this bone we shall understand our strong faith in Christs merits, & by the blood the lively and fruitful sap of good works proceeding out of the same, which are rare things to be found in those that seek their own private gain, who when they are let blood by the sharp Lance of Gods Justice, and it be established by Divine Predication, and made dry with the sun of outward profession, yet being washt with the water of swelling Pride, malice, Envy, and such like, then the Faith in Christs Merits, is as though we had not received it, and the lively fruitful sap of good works hath no power to tarry upon it, but vanisheth away. And thus it fared with these other two, the first and second Sons: but the third Son being contrary unto the other in profession and practice of life & manners be

he

a Magistrate or mean person, the bone of such a person will ever be firm of Faith, in himself and towards others. From such a mans bone the blood of lively fruits (to himself and all others profitable) will never be washed away with the water of wretchedness. But the more it is dryed in the Sun of true trial, the better it is: Such are the true Children of God, of whom our Lord speaketh thus: ye which have forsaken all things for me; that is, ye that have forsaken the way of sin, shall receive an hundred times more, that is, ye shall not only receive the tree of Paradice, but also the Heritage of Heaven. These other two are Bastards, because what they promised in their Baptism, they wrought all the contrary through their wicked living, & therefore he that desireth to obtain the joyes of Heaven, must abide stedfastly, in the profession and practice of good life and manners, and then by Christ he shall obtain the Tree of Paradise; Unto which he bring us, who liveth and reigneth for ever. Amen.

The Argument.

God so loved sinful man, that he sent his only begotten Son to redeem him out of the captivity of the World, to rest with him in the joyes of Heaven.

The third History.

IN Rome there dwelt sometimes a Noble Emperor, named Diocletian, who loved exceedingly

cedingly the vertue of Charity, wherefore he desired greatly to know what Fowl loved her young best, to the intent that he might thereby grow to more perfect charity; it fortuned upon a day, that the Emperor rode to a Forrest to take his disport, whereas he found the nest of a great bird (called in latin Struchio Calemi, in English an Ostridge) with her young, the which young bird the Emperor took with him, and closed her in a Vessel of glass, the Dam of this little Bird followed unto the Emperors Palace, and flew into the Hall where her young one was. But when she saw her young one, and could not come to her, nor get her out, she returned again to the Forrest, and abode there three days and at the last she came again to the Palace bearing in her mouth a worm called Thumas and when she came where her young one was she let the worm fall upon the Glass, by vertue of which worm the glass brake, and the young one flew forth with her Dam. When the Emperor saw this, he praised much the Dam of the Bird, which laboured so diligently to deliver her young one.

The Moral.

Dear friends, this Emperor is the Father of Heaven, which greatly loveth them that live in perfect love and charity? This little bird taken from the Forrest, and closed in the glass

Glasse, was Adam our Forefather, which was exiled out of Paradise and put into the Glass, that is, Hell. This hearing the Dam of the Bird, that is the Son of God, he descended from Heaven, unto the Forrest of the world, and lived there three dayes bearing with him a worm, that is, Man-hood, according to the psalmist, I am a worm & no man. This was slain among the Jews, of whose blood the vessel external was broken, and the Bird went out, that is, Adam went forth with his Dam the Son of God, and flew to Heaven.

The Argument.

A clean Spirit and undefiled Soul is the Daughter of God, so dear unto him that he bestows her not upon the rich man wanting wisdome, but upon the poor man that is wise, and liveth in his fear, which if shee have at any time transgress'd by frailty of flesh, then seeketh she for recovery of her health by the medicine of amendment of life: such a soul shall be espoused to Christ, and live with him in the world to come everlastingly.

The fourth History.

SOmtime reigned in Rome a worthy Emperor and a wise, which had a fair daughter and a gracious in the sight of every man. This Emperor bethought him one day, to whom he might give his daughter in marriage reasoning thus: If I give my Daughter to a Rich man, and he be a fool then is he lost, but if I give her to a poor and a wise

man, then may he get his living by his wis-
dome.

There was at that time dwelling in th
City of Rome, a Philosopher named Socrates
poor but wise, which came to the Emperou
and said My Lord, be not displeased thoug
I put forth my Petition before your high
ness, ẏ Emperor said, speak on; then said So
crates My Lord, ye have a Daughter whom
I desire above all things. The Emperor an
swered and said: My friend, I shall give th
my Daughter to Wife on this condition
that if she dye in fellowship after, that she i
espoused to thée, thou shalt without doul
lose thy head. Then said Socrates upon th
condition I will gladly take her to my wif
The Emp. hearing this' called all the Lord
& States of his Empire and made a gre
feast at their wedding. And after the fea
Socrates led home his wife to his own Houl
where they lived in peace & health long tim
But at the last the Emperor Daughter sic
ned to death almost. When Socrates percei
ed this, he said to himself, Alas and woe
me, what shall I do, and whether shall I fl
if the Emperors Daughter that is my wi
should die? And for sorrow this Socrates wa
to a Forrest there beside and wept bitterly.

Then while he thus wept & mourn'd, th
came an aged man having a staff in his ha
a

and asked him why he mourned. Socrates answered and said: I espoused the emperors daughter upon this condition, that if she die in my fellowship, I should lose my life: now she is sickned to death almost, and I can find no remedy nor help, and therefore I mourn.

Then said the old man, be of good comfort for I shall help you if ye will do after my counsel: In this forrest be three herbs, if you make drink of the first for your wife, and of the other two a plaister, and if ye use this medicical drink & plaister in due time, without doubt she shal recover her perfect health. Socrates did all that the old man had taught him. And when his wife had used a while that medicical drink and plaister, within short time she was perfectly whole of all her sickness. And when the Emperor heard that Socrates had so recovered his wife, he promoted him to great honour.

The Moral

Dear friends, the Emperor is our Lord Jesus Christ, his daughter so fair and so gracious is the soul, made to the similitude of God which is so glorious in the sight of him and of his Angels while that she is not defiled, but abideth in her own proper cleanness. This soul God would not give it to a rich man but to a poor, that is, a man that is made of the slime of the earth.

This Socrates is a poor man, for why: every man cometh poor and naked into this world from his Mothers belly, & every man takes his soul in wedlock upon such condition that if she die in his fellowship by deadly sin; without doubt he shall lose eternal life. Therefore O thou man if thy wife sicken through frailty of flesh, unto sin, do then as Socrates did, go unto the Forrest, that is, the Church of Christ, and thou shalt finde there an old man with a staffe, that is, a discreet Preacher, which shall Minister unto thee these three herbs, whereof may be confected the Medicine of thy recovery unto health. The first herb is acknowledging of sin, the second is repentance: and the third is newness of life, according to the will of God: If these hearbs be used in a plaister, the sinner without doubt shall receive his health, and his soul shall be delivered from sin, and assuredly he shall have everlasting life; Unto the which bring us our Lord Jesus Christ.

The *Argument*.

Many fooliſh Ideots of the world, which flow in abundance of worldly wealth and pomp, thinking they ſhall live here alwaies, are laboured unto by the preachers of Gods word, and admoniſhed of their momentany felicities, and prepare themſelves in beſtowing wel their ſhort time here, that they may injoy the bleſſings of everlaſting felicity in the world to come.

The fifth Hiſtory.

SOmtime there reign'd in Rome a mighty Emperor and a wiſe, named Frederick, who

who had one onely son whom he loved much. This Emperor when he lay at point of death called unto him his son, and said: Dear son, I have a Ball of Gold, which I charge thee on my blessing that thou anon after my death shalt give to the veriest fool thou canst finde. Then said his Son: My Lord without doubt your will shall be fulfilled: Anon this young Lord after the death of his father, went and sought many Realms, & found many wretchless fools, but because he would perform his fathers will, he sought til he came to a Realm where the law was such, as every year a new King was chosen who had the ruling of the Realm for one year onely, and at the years end he was deposed & exiled, into an Island where he finished his life in misery. When the Emperors Son came to this Realm, the new King was chosen with great honor, and brought unto his Regal seat with much musick and great reverence. And when the Emperor saw that, he came unto him, and salute him reverently, saying: My Lord, lo I give you this ball of gold, on my Fathers behalf. Then said he: I pray thee tell me the cause why thou givest me this ball: Then answered he, and said: My Father charged me on his death bed, that I should give this Ball to the most fool I could finde: wherefore I have sought many Realms, and have found many fools, but a more fool than thou

I never found: for it is unknown to thee that thou shalt reign but a year, and at the years end thou shalt be exiled into such a place, whereereas thou shalt die a miserable death: wherefore I hold thee most fool, as ever I found, for as much as, for the Lordship of a year thou wilt so wilfully lose thy self: and therefore I give thee this Ball. Then said the King, Without doubt thou saiest truly, and therefore while I am now in full power of this Realm, I will send before me great treasure, wherewith I may sustain my self from miserable death, when I shall be exiled and put down. And so this was done: and at the years end when he was exiled, he lived there in peace and quietness, and afterwards died a good death.

The Moral

Dear friends this Emperor is the Father of Heaven, the which bequeathed the ball, that is, worldly riches to fools and Idiots, who savour nothing but what is earthly. This Emperors Son, is a Preacher or discreet Minister that travelleth about many Realms and Lands, to shew unbelieving men and fools their peril. The Realm why rein no King might reign but a year, is the world. For whoso liveth an hundred years, when he dieth he shall seem to have lived

ved but the space of an year: therefore do
s the King did while you be in power of life,
and before you your treasure, that is firm
faith in Christs merits, and the fruits of
Gods Word, proceeding from the same, then
ertainly when we be exiled out of this
World we shall live in peace, and shall
nde the mercy of God plentifully, whereby
e shall obtain eternal life. Unto which
ring us, he that for us shed his precious
lood.

The Argument.

The evil disposed men of this world are here advertised of their greedy griping after the sweet temptations of the Devil, wherein such do rejoyce till death cometh suddenly upon them, and then they fall into the horrible pit of desolate darkness, due to their desert.

The sixth History.

Diocletian reigned in the City of Rome in whose Empire dwelt a noble Philosopher, who by his Art set up an Image in the midst of the City of Rome, which Image stretched out his Arm, and his foremost finger, whereupon stood this posie written in Latine: percute hic, strike here. This Image after the death of the Philosopher stood a long time, and many great Clarks came for to read the superscription that was on the finger, but none understood it: wherefore the people wondred much. At

last a long time after, there came a strange Clark out of a far Country, and when he saw the Image, he read the superscription, strike here. And then upon a day when he saw the shadow of the hand, he took a Mattock, and brok up the ground under the hand where the shadow was acco,ding to the understanding of the superscription, and anon he found an house all of Marble underneath the ground, wherein he found so much Riches, so many Jewels, and so great marvels as he never saw before. And at last he saw a table ready covered, and all manner of things necessary thereto, set thereupon. He farther beheld and saw a Carbuncle in the Hall that lighted all the house. And against this Carbuncle on the other side, stood a man holding a bow in his hand, and an Arrow ready to shoot. The Clerk marvelled much when he saw all these things, and thought with himself, that if I tell this forth, there will no man believe me, and therefore I will have somewhat of these goods in token thereof. And with that he saw a knife of Gold upon the Table, the which he took, and would have put it in his bosom, but then the Archer smote the Carbuncle and brake it, whereby the whole house was shadow and made dark, which when the Clerk perceived wept most bitterly, for he knew no way to get out,

for

or as much as the house was made dark through the breaking of the Carbuncle. And the darkness abode there for ever after. And so finished the Clerk his life there in that darkness.

The Moral.

Dear friends, this Image thus standing betokens the Devil, which saith evermore, strike here, that is, seek after worldly riches and not for heavenly treasure. This Clerk that digged with the Mattock, doth betoken the worldly wise men of this world, as evil disposed pleaders of the Law, crafty Attorneys, and other wicked worldlings, that be ever smiting what by right, and what by wrong, so that they may get the vanities of the world, and in their smiting they finde great wonders, that is, they finde wherein the delights of the world, wherein many men rejoyce. The Carbuncle that giveth light to the youth of man, which giveth hardiness to take their pleasure in worldly riches. The Archer with his Arrow is Death, which lays watch against man to slay him. The Clerk that took up the knife, betokeneth every worldly man, that coveteth ever to have all things to his will, Till death smiteth the Carbuncle, that is, the youth, strength and power of man, and then lyeth he wrapped in the darkness of sin, in which darkness sometimes he dyeth. There

There-

Therefore study we to fly the World, and her vain delights. and then we shall be sure to win everlasting life, unto which Christ Jesus bring us, Amen

The Argument.

We are here generally put in minde, that the Devil besieging the World, our Champion Christ Jesus be ready to take our quarrel into his own hand, whose descending and saving us from the invasion and circumvention of Satan, is yet accursed for us as a transgressor, and is content to suffer death for our full Justification.

The Seventh History.

IN Rome dwelt somtime a mighty Emperor named Titus, who ordained in his days such a Law, that what Knight dyed in the Empire should be buried in his armour and whosoever presum'd to spoil any Kt. of his Armour after he was dead, should dye without any gain-saying, It befel after few yeares that a City of the Empire was in danger of losing, for none that were in the City could defend themselves by any manner of policy, wherefore great sorrow and lamentation was made throughout the City.

But at last within few dayes there came to the City a young Knight well-favoured and valiant in feats of Arms, whom the worthy men of the City beholding, and understanding his prowels, cryed to him with

all

ne voice: O thou most noble knight, we be-
ech thee to help us now at our most need for
ou may see this City is like to be lost: Then
e answered and said: Sirs, ye see I have no
rmour but if I had, I would defend your
ity.

This hearing a mighty man of that City, he
id to him secretly: Sir, here lived some-
me a valiant Knight who now is dead and
uried within the City, and if it please you
take his Armour ye may defend this
ity and deliver us from peril, and that
ill be honour unto you, and profit unto the
ity.

The young Knight hearing this, went to
e Grave, and arrayed himself with the
rmour: and after much fight obtained the
ictory, and delivered the City. Which
ne, he laid the Armour again in the
rave. But there were some men of the
ity who envyed him because he had obtain-
the victory, and accused him to the Judge,
ying thus: Sir, a Law was made by the
mperor that whosoever dispoiled any dead
Knight of his Armour should dye. This
oung Knight found a dead Knight, and
ok away his Armor, therfore I beseech thee
hat thou proceed in law against him with e-
uity & Justice, in giving him severe punish-
ent for so offending the law. When the Judg

heard

heard this, he made the Knight to be take
and when he was examined of this his trel
pass against the Law, he said thus: Sir,
is written in the Law, that of two harm
the least is to be chosen. It is not unknow
to you, that this City was in peril to b
lost, and had I not taken this Armour, I ha
neither saved you nor the City, therefo
methinks you ought rather to honour me fo
this good deed that I have done, than thu
shamefully to reprove me: for I am led as h
that is ready to be hanged. Also good Sirs
another thing I may alledge for my excuse
he that stealeth or robbeth violently, purpos
eth not to restore the thing which he stealeth
but it is not thus with me; for though I to
the Armour of the dead Knight for your de
fence and safegard, when I had obtained th
victory, I bare it again to the same place
and to the dead knight whose it is by the Law
Then said the Justice, a thief that break
eth a house that he may steal and bear awa
such as he can finde although he bring agai
that he hath taken, I ask of thee if that th
breaking of the house be lawful or not
The knight answered, sometimes th
breaking of the house may be good, whereas
it is made in a feble place, which woul
cause the Master of the house to make hi
wal

wall stronger, that the Theeves after breaking by force the walls so lightly, for avoiding of more harm.

Then said the Judge, if the breaking of the house be good, nevertheless in that breaking, violence is done to the Lord of the house: And so though thou didst restore the Armour of the dead Knight, nevertheless, thou didst wrong to the dead Knight in taking away his Armour. The Knight said, I have told you, that of two harms the least is to be chosen, & that harm where through great goodness cometh, ought not to be called harm, it should rather be called good. For if a house within the City were on fire and began to burn, it were better that three or four houses thereby should be thrown to the ground, than that they should be set one fire also, whereby all the City would be burned, right so, if the Armour of the dead Knight had not been taken the City had been lost. And when the Judge heard that he answered so well and so reasonably, he could give no judgment against him. But they who had accused this Knight, slew them: for whose death there was great weeping throughout all the City, and his body was honourably buried in a new Tomb.

The Moral.

Dear friends, this Emperor is the Father of

of heaven, & this City is the world, which i
besieged of the Devil and deadly sin, and a
many as were within the City, were all i
peril to be lost. This young kt. that came t
the City is our Lord Jesus Christ, who ha
not the Armour of humanity, till he went t
the grave, that is, the womb of the glorious
Virgin Mary, by the annunciation of th
Angel, saying, The holy Ghost shall light o
thee & Lo, thou shalt conceive and bear a Son
And thus in the womb of the Virgin he to
the armor of the dead Knight, that is, ỹ man
hood of Adam our forefather, & saved the cit
that is, the world and mankind, by his bles
sed passion that he suffered on the cross, an
he put the armor again into the grave, whe
his blessed body was buried; but the citizen
envied him, that is, the Jewes accused him t
Pilate, saying: If thou suffer him thus, thou ar
not Cæsars friend? we have a Law? and after th
Law he ought to die Joh. 19. 21. And thus ou
Lord Jesus Christ of his enemies was co
demned to the death of the cross, and afte
ascended up to heaven, whither he wil brin
us. Amen

The Argument.

The fornication of the wicked worldly men i
here directed dy the providence of God, an
by his gracious favour, the sinner is deliverre
out of thraldome of sin, unto the liberty of lif
everlasting.

The eighth History

THere reign'd, sometime in Rome a mighty Emperor and a wise, named Berold: who ordained a Law, that what woman was taken in adultry, her husband being alive she should be cast into perpetual prison. There was at that time a knight that had a fair Lady to his wife, who comitted adultry, her husband being alive, and was with child, therefore by the Law she was put in prison, where in short time she was dilivered of a fair son. The child grew up til he was seven years old, & his mother dayly wept bitterly: which when the child heard, he said unto her, O Mother why weep ye thus? and for what cause are you thus perplexed? Then said his Mother, O my swèet Son, I have great cause to mourn, and thou also, for above our heads are people walking & the Sun shineth in clearness, and we be here continually in such darkness, that I can neither sée thée nor thou me, alas that ever I conceived thée. Then said the Son such joy as you speak of, I never saw, for I was borne here in this darkness, therefore if I had meat and drink enough I should live here all my life. Therefore Mother wèep not but be chearful. This lamentation that was betwèen the Mother & the Son the Emperors Steward heard, that stood above their heads, whereof he had great compassion, and went

to

to the Emperour, and kneeling besought him of his Grace, that the Mother and the Son might be delivered out of prison. The Emperor as a mercifull Lord, granted that they should be delivered. Nevertheless, if they trespassed so in time to come, they should be punished with double pain. And after she was delivered she lived joyfully.

The Moral.

Dear friends, this Emperor is Father of Heaven that made the Law, that what married woman, that is, what soul that is espoused to the Lord, doth commit adultery, that is, doth worship strange Gods, should be cast into the Prison of Hell; therefore the sinful soul hath great cause to weep, for she is debarred from light, that is, from the joys of Heaven. Her Son that desired meat and drink, are the wealthy wicked Worldlings, that say to the Preachers that preach unto them the joys of Heaven, that while we may live and have all the solace of the world, we desire no other Heaven. The Steward that heard their Lamentation, is the Lord Jesus Christ, who knowing all the privities of our sorrowfull and repentant hearts for our sins, besought the Father of Heaven for us, that we might be delivered from the prison of sin, and so come to everlasting Life. Unto which he bring us all Amen.

The Argument.

Christ Proclaimeth the joyful Feast of Heaven, whereto the Lame, that is, the poor Preachers of the Gospel, having their sight of Knowledge in Gods Word, supported by the blind Laity, and each mutually comforting others, they approach unto the proclaimed Feast or perpetual felicity.

The ninth History.

SOmetime in Rome dwelt an Emperor named Pompey, who above all other things was merciful. This Emperor proclaimed throughout all his Empire a great Feast, & that poor and rich should come to the Feast, & whosoever came to that Feast should not only be well fed, but also should have great gifts.

When the Herald had warned all manner of men to come to this Feast; at that time there were two poor men lying by the way, the one being lame, and the other blind. Alas, said one of these men to the other, woe to us both, how shall we do? for the Emperor hath proclaimed a Feast, and whosoever cometh thither, shal not only be well fed, but also shall have great gifts, and I am blind, and thou art lame. How shall we do? Then said the lame man to the blind man, I shall give thee good counsel, if thou wilt do after me; I am lame, and feeble, and may not go, nevertheless I can see, and thou art blind, but strong: take thou me upon thy back, and bear me, and I shall direct the right way, and thus we shall both come to the Emperors Feast.

Then ſaid the blind man let it be ſo, get tho
on my back, and I ſhall bear thee, and guid
thon me, and ſo they did, and came both t
the feaſt, and received great rewards, a
after ended their lives in peace.

The Moral.

Dear Friends, this Emperor is our Sav
our Jeſus Chriſt, that proclaimeth a Feaſ
that is, the joyes of Heaven, unto the whi
joyes he calleth all mankinde, and forſake
no man that will come unto him. This la
man betokeneth ẏ por Miniſters of the Go
pel, which wanting worldly wealth, live
the Providence of God; And this blinde m
betokeneth the Lay-men, who know not t
right way to Heaven. It behoveth the bli
man, that is, the Lay-men, to bear the la
man, that is, the Miniſters of the Goſp
ſuſtaining & feeding them with the duties
the Church: and the Miniſters in Gods ca
are bound to teach and to informe us in t
way to Heaven, whereas we ſhall not on
have a Feaſt, but alſo great reward and j
Unto which God bring us all. Amen.

The Argument.

Heaven and Hell are here compared to two Cities, t
Cities are two contrary wayes: to Heaven (whic
the City of all Heavenly treaſure and felicity)
narrow, crooked, craggy, and a painful way, ha
three, Enemies, the Devil, the World and the F
To Hell (being the City or ſink of ſorrow and ſadn

a fair way, broad, plain, and easie, having three guides, that is, Pride of life, Covetousnes of the eyes, and Concupiscence of the Flesh.

The tenth History.

SOmetime in Rome dwelt an Emperor named Folliculus, who was very wise and merciful in all his works. This Emperor builded in the East a Noble City, wherein he put all his Treasure to be kept. Unto this City the way was stony, full of Brambles and sharp Thorns, and three Knights were armed ready to fight with them that would come to that City. Therefore the Emperor ordained that whosoever overcame these Knights, should enter the City, & take at his will of the Emperors Treasure. After that this Emperor did make in the North a City, wherein he ordained all manner of pain, sorrow, and tormenting for Malefactors, to which was a broad way very delectable, growing full of Roses and fair Lillies, & in their way were three Knights ever waiting, if any man came toward the City of the North, to serve him with all manner of delicates and necessary provision: And if it fortuned that any man did enter within that City, the custome was such, that the people would bind him hand and foot, and cast him into Prison there to abide the sentence of the Judge.

When this was cryed throughout all the

Empire, there were two Knights dwelling in one City, one named Jonathas, who was a wise man, the other called Pirrhus, who was a Fool, nevertheless there had continued betwæn them great love. This Jonathas said to Pirrhus: Dear friends, there is a common cry made throughout all the Land, that the Emperor hath made a City in the East, wherein he hath put his treasure, and whosoever may enter that City, shall take what he will of the treasure, therefore let us go thither.

Then said Pirrhus: Thy Counsel is good, let us go. The wise Knight said: if it be so that thou wilt follow my counsel, I pray thæ that faithful friendship may continue betwæn us, and in token of love thou shalt drink my blood, and I will drink thine, on this condition, that neither of us leave other in this journey. The foolish Knight said, it pleaseth me right wel, therefore they were both let blood, and each of them drank others blood. When this was done, they went forth together on their journey, and when they had gone thræ days journey toward the City where their treasures was, they came to a place where were two ways, one sharp, and stony, and full of Thorns, the other fair and plain, and full of Delights. Then said the wise Knight to his fellow: Dear friend,

he

here are two waies, one sharp and thorny nevertheles, if we go this way, we shal come to a City that is so rich, and there we shall have that we desire. Then said the foolish Knight to his fellow, I wonder greatly at you, that you will speak such things, for I will rather beléeve mine eyes than your words. I sée here openly, and so do you, that here is a hard way, and full of thorns and as I have heard, there be thrée Champions armed in this way ready to fight against all men that go towards the City of the East, & therefore I will not go that way, but here is (as you may sée) another way plain and easie to walk in, & in this way are thrée Knights ready to serve us, and give all manner of things delightful for us: and therefore by this way I will go, and not by that other way. Then said the wise Knight, certainly if we go by that way, we shall be led into the City of the North, wherin there is no mercy, but perpetual pain and sorrow, and there we shall be taken and bound, and cast into Prison. Certainly said the foolish Knight this way is the ready way, and as I believe it is more profitable than ýother way. Then went they both forth the fair way, and anon thrée Knights met with them, which received them courteously for one night, and gave them all manner of things that were

pleasant to them. And on the morrow, they took their journey forth toward the City, and when they were within the City, anon the Emperors Officers met with them, & said: Friends, why came ye hither? insomuch that ye knew the Law of this City is so cruel of long time heretofore, surely ye shall be served now after the Law. Anon they took the wise Knight, and brought him, and cast him into prison, and after that they took the foolish Knight, and bound him fast, and cast him into a Ditch. Soon after it befel, that the Judge came to the City to give judgment on them that had trespassed the Law, and anon all the prisoners were brought forth before the Judge, among whom these two Knights were brought forth, one from prison, and the other from the Ditch. Then said the wise Knight to the Judge: My reverend Lord, I complain of my fellow that he is guilty of my death: for when we two came to the two ways, whereof the one led to the City of the East, and the other to this City, I told him all the peril of this City, and the reward of that other City, but he would not believe me, but said to me in this wise: I will believe mine own eyes better then thy words, and because he was my fellow, I would not let him go alone in this way: and thus came I with him, wherefore he is the cause of my death.

Then

Then said the foolish Knight, I complain that he is the cause of my death: for it is not unknown to you all, that I am a fool and he a wise man, and therefore he should not so lightly have followed my folly, for if he had forsaken this way, I should have followed him, & therefore he is the cause of my death. Then said the Judge to the wise Knight, because that thou with all thy wisdom, so lightly consentedst and followedst the will of the fool, and his foolish works: and thou fool, because thou didst reject the good counsel and advice of the wise, and wouldest not believe him, I give Judgement, that ye both be hanged for your trespass: and so it was done. Wherefore all men praised greatly the Judge for his discreet Judgement.

The Moral.

Dear friends, this Emperor is Almighty God, and in the East is the City of Heaven wherein is treasure infinite: And unto this City is a hard way and full of Thorns, that is, the way of Repentance, by which way full few walk: for it is hard and straight according to the holy scripture, saying thus, Arcta est via quæ ducit ad vitam, It is a straight way that leadeth to everlasting life. In this way are three armed Knights, that is the Devil, the World, and the Flesh: with whom it behoveth us to fight, and to

obtain the victory before we may come to Heaven. The second City that is in the North is Hell: and to this accordeth the Scripture saying thus, Ab aquilone ponetur omne malum: Out of the North cometh all evil. Certainly to this City the way is plain and broad, and walled about on every side with all manner of delights, wherefore many men walk by this way. The three Kts that give to every man going this way, what thing they please, are these: Pride of life, Covetousnes of the eyes, and Concupiscence of the flesh: in which three the wretched man greatly delighteth, and at the last they lead him to Hell. This witty Knight betokeneth the soul, and the foolish Knight betokeneth the flesh, which is alwayes foolish and at all times ready to do evil. These two are fellows and knit in one: for either of them drink others blood; that is, they shall drink of one cup either of joy or pain, which they shall have after the day of Doom.

The Soul chuseth the way of repentance, and in as much as she may, she stirreth the Flesh to do the same. But the Flesh never thinketh what shall come after, & therefore she goeth in the delights of this World, and flyeth the vertue of Repentance. And thus the Soul after death is cast into Hell, & the Flesh is cast into the Ditch, that is, into the

Grave.

save. But when the Judge cometh, that is, our Lord Jesus Christ, at the last day to judge all man-kind; Then the Soul shall complain upon the Flesh, and the Flesh upon the Soul: But then the Judge that cannot be deceived shall condemn the Soul, because he followed the frailty of the Flesh, and the Flesh because it would not believe the Soul. Wherefore let us study to tame our flesh that we may obey God, and then we shall have eternal life. Unto which bring us our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

The Argument.

The Soul of man being possest of the Princely Territory of Paradise, was by the Devil provoked to sin against his Creator, and for the same transgression (being thence into the world exiled) lost that heritage: but by Christs blessed Death and Passion was restored to a more happy Heritage of everlasting Felicity.

The eleventh History.

There dwelt sometime in Rome a mighty Emperor named Frederick, which had no child but one onely Daughter, to whom his Emperor after his decease bequeathed all his Empire. This understanding an earl that dwelt there beside, he came to this young Lady, and wooed her, and provoked her to sin all that he might: whereby this young Lady in short process of time inclined to the Earl, and this Earl anon lay with her, and defiled

defiled her: and after that, he drave her from her Heritage, & exiled her out of the Empire, wherefore ſhe made great lamentation, and fled unto a Realm there beſide, where ſhe daily wept and mourned.

It befel after on a day, that while ſhe ſat mourning by the high-way ſide, there came riding by her a fair young Knight upon Horſe, who came towards her a great pace and very courteouſly ſaluted her, asking her the cauſe why ſhe mourned ſo ſore. Then anſwered ſhe, and ſaid: My Reverend Lord, I am an Emperours Daughter, deſcended of Royal blood, my Father is dead who left me all his Empire, becauſe he had no other heir. And after his deceaſe a falſe Earl there-beſide deceived me, deflour'd my Virginity, and after that, he put me violently out of my Heritage, ſo that now I am fain to beg my bread from door to door, and this is the cauſe of my ſorrow. Then ſaid the Knight: Fair Damſel, I have great compaſſion on thy beauty and on thy comlineſs: therefore if thou wilt grant me one thing I will fight for thee againſt the Earl, & I will aſſure thee the victory? Then ſaid ſhe, alas, good ſir, I have nothing that I may give unto you but my ſelf; And I ask no more of thee, ſaid the Knight, but that thou would be my wife, and love no man ſo much

ne. Then said she: Reverend Sir, that I will do gladly, and more if I might. Then said the Knight: I will that you do nothing for me, but if it fortune me to dye in the fight for thee, and obtain the victory, thou shalt take my bloody shirt, and hang it upon a beam in thy Chamber: and this thou shalt do for two causes: The first is, that whensoever thou beholdest the shirt, thou shalt weep for me. The second is, that whatsoever man cometh to woo thee to be his wife, thou shalt then hastily run unto thy Chamber and there beholding my bloody shirt, think heartily within thy self thus.

The Lord of this shirt died for my love in battel, by which he recovered my Heritage. God forbid I should take any other man after his death. Then said she: Reverend sir, all this I shall fulfil by the grace of God. And when the Knight heard this, he assayed to fight against the said Earl, and obtained the victory, and the Earl was overcome and led, and this young Lady was brought and received again into her Heritage. Nevertheless, the Knight was deadly wounded in that battel, whereof he died: but ere he died he bequeathed his bloody shirt unto this Damsel, desiring her to keep her promise. When this young lady heard of his death, she wept sore, for in his shirt was wrought thus.

Think

Think on me, and have in minde
Him that to thee was ſo kinde.

Anon when ſhe had received this ſhirt, ſhe hanged it upon a beam in her Chamber, and as oft as ſhe beheld it ſhe wept bitterly. It befell not long after, that the States of the Empire came to her, and deſired her to take an Husband, but then ſhe went to her Chamber, and beheld the bloody ſhirt, and waxed ſorrowful, and ſaid oftentimes, woe and alas thou ſuffereddſt death for my love, and thou alſo recoveredſt again my Heritage? God forbid that I ſhould take any other man but thee. And thus ſhe anſwered every man that came to her: and ſo they went away diſappointed of their purpoſe, and ſhe ended her life in reſt.

The Moral.

Dear Friends, this Emperor is the Father of Heaven, and this Daughter is the Soul of man, made to the ſimilitude of God: to whom he gave and bequeathed the Empire of Paradiſe. But there came the Earl, that is, the Devil, and provoked her to ſin, when ſhe eat of the Apple, and ſaid to her thus: In what hour ye eat of this Apple ye ſhall be Gods. Wherefore we breaking Gods commandement were exiled out of Paradiſe, to live in this World in great wretchedneſs,

as

as the Scripture saith: In the sweat of thy face thou shalt eat thy Bread. But then came a fair young Knight and a strong, that is, our Lord Jesus Christ, who had compassion upon man-kind, and taking upon him our flesh and blood, gave battel to the Devil and overcame him: and thus won he again our Heritage. Therefore let us do as this young Lady did, let us lay this bloody shirt, that is, the remembrance of the Passion of Christ on the beam of our hearts let us think how our Lord Jesus shed his precious blood for us. And if any man, that is, of the Devil, or any other would stir us to sin, let us think presently on the passion of Christ saying thus: I will take none other but thee, who hast shed thy blood for me, and thus shall we win everlasting life. Unto which God bring us all, Amen.

The Argument.

We are here generally advertised of honouring the Sabbath day: how for the redeeming of time, to be occupied in Ghostly Contemplation, is profitable to the Soul and Body. Also preachers of Gods Word oftentime, for saying truth purchase ill will. If we bestow our talents in the amplifying of our Faith, and furthering one of another with good works, we shall in time inherit the fruition of eternal life prepared for Christ's Elect.

The twelfth History.

IN Rome sometime dwelt a mighty Emperor named Apolonius, who obtained

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a Law, that every man upon pain of deat
should celebrate the day of his Nativity
This Emperor called to them a Clerk tha
was hight Virgil, and said: My dear Maste
there be many hainous offences done in m
Empire contrary to the Law, therefore I
pray thee, that thou by thy cunning wouldes
make some craft whereby I may know wh
trespasseth against the Law privately or o
penly. Then said Virgil, My reverend Lor
your will shall be done, anon this Virg
through his craft made an Image in th
midst of the City of Rome, which denounc
& told all the Emperors messengers who tre
passed against the Law, and who not. The
was at that time dwelling in ỳ City of Ro
a Smith that hight Focus, which by no mea
would celebrate the Nativity of the Emp
ror. It befel upon a night as the Smith l
in his bed, he thought upon the Image th
accused many men before, dreading lest t
Image would accuse him, wherefore he aro
& went to the Image, & said: I make a V
to God, if thou accuse me I shall break t
head, & when he had said thus, he went hom
The Emperor on the morrow following s
Messengers to the Image, (as before time
was accustomed) to know and understand w
had trespassed against the Law. And to th
then said the Image, lift up your eyes a
beh

behold what is ingraven in the forehead. And when they looked up, they saw this posie written. Times be changed and men become worse and worse: for he that will say the Truth shall have his head broken. Therefore go ye forth to your Lord, and tell him all that ye have heard and seen. The Messengers went forth and told the Emperor all they had heard and seen.

Then said the Emperor, arm your selves and go to the Image, and if that you find any man that hath menaced or threatned to hurt the Image, bind him hand and foot, and bring him unto me. Then went the Messengers forth to the Image, and said to it: tell us the truth, if any man have threatned thee, and we shall revenge thee anon. Then said the Image; take the smith Focus, for he is the man that will not honour the Nativity of the Emperor; Straightway the Messengers led forth the Smith before the Emperor: and there examined him why he kept not the day of the Emperors Nativity in Reverence & Honor, according to the Law? Then answered the smith, and said: Reverend Lord, I beseech you that you will hear mine excuse, & if I answer not reasonably to all manner of points that ye shall ask me, I will yeild me fully to your grace: then said ẏ Emperor. I will hear thee, and that which is right, that I will do.

Then

Then ſaid the Smith, I muſt have eight pence every day in the week, & than I cannot get without great labour, and therefore I may not kæp that day holy day more than other days. Then ſaid the Emperor, why muſt thou have this eight pence? Then ſaid the Smith, I am bound to pay daily two pence, and two pence I lend, and two pence I loſe, and two pence I ſpend: Then ſaid the Emperor, tell me more expreſſly of theſe eight pence; Then ſaid the Smith, I am bound every day to pay two pence to my Father, for when I was young he ſpent daily two pence on me, which I am bound to pay him again for his ſuſtentation: and two pence I loſe on my wife. Then ſaid the Emperor, why loſeſt thou that two pence on thy wife? Then ſaid he: where ſaw ye ever a woman but ſhe had one of theſe properties, either ſhe was wilful and contrary to her Husband, or hot of complexion: & therefore that I give her I loſe, and two pence I lend to my Son, wherewith he is ſuſtained, that when I come to age and poverty he may pay me two pence again, like as I do my Father. And I ſpend two pence on my ſelf in meat and drink and that is little enough. Then ſaid the Emperor, thou haſt anſwered well & wiſely. Not long after the Emperor died, and this Smith Focus was choſen to be Emperor, be-

cauſe

cause he spent his eight pence so wisely and so profitably, and thus he ended his life in peace and rest.

The Moral.

Dear Friends, this Emperor is our blessed Saviour Jesus Christ, which ordained by his holy Law, that every one should keep holy the Sabbath-day. This Virgil that made that Image is the holy Ghost who established among us Preachers, to teach vertues and reprove vices, and they should not spare the Poor nor the Rich. But now if a Preacher should speak the truth against any man, he shall be threatned by the enemies of Christ, that is, by evil men that neither love God nor man. Wherefore the Preacher may say now a days, that posie which was written in the fore-head of the Image: Times be changed from good to ill, and Men be daily worse: for whoso could speak the Truth now a dayes shall have his head broken. Therefore it is needful they be armed, that is, ought to be armed with vertuous examples of good life, and then they need not fear, because they have the truth of God to stand by them, according to the Apostles saying: If God be for us, who can be against us?

By this Smith Focus is understood every good Christian-man, who daily should spend his time in redeeming every hours travel

that, before the Prelates of the Church, they can hardly obtain an assurance of Heaven, because they be not on the right way to leave their sin. Therefore let us study with all diligence to please God, that we may obtain everlasting life, which is laid up in store for all those that live modestly, looking for eternal Salvation. Unto which bring us Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

The Argument.

A certain faithful vow of love being made between the Soul of every faithful Christian and Jesus Christ, we are to consider the merciful and gracious Covenant of God toward the faithful, and to be careful of this Covenant, and we are to study to perform our Vows, as we at the prefixed day of Promise being undefiled may thereby purchase the promised place of everlasting glory, prepared for all them that seek the glory of God, and their souls health.

The fourteenth History.

IN Rome sometime dwelt a mighty Emperor named Philominus, who had one only Daughter who was fair and gracious in the sight of every man, who had to name Aglae. There was also in the Emperors Palace a gentle Knight that loved dearly this Lady. It befel after on a day, that this Knight talked with this Lady, and secretly uttered his desire to her. Then she said courteously seeing you have uttered to me the secrets of your heart, I will likewise for your love utter to you the secrets of my heart, & truly I say

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that above all other I love you best. Then said the Knight, I purpose to visit the Holy Land, and therefore give me your Troth, that this seven years you shall take no other Man, but onely for my love to tarry for me so long, and if I come not again by this day seven years, then take what man you like best. And likewise I promise you that within this seven years I will take no Wife. Then said she this Covenant pleaseth me well. When this was said, each of them was betrothed to other, and then this Knight took his leave of the Lady and went to the holy Land. Shortly after the Emperor treated with the King of Hungaria for the marriage of his Daughter. Then came the K. of Hungary to ỳ Emperors Palace to sæ his Daughter, & when he had sæn her, he liked marvellous well her beauty and her behaviour, so that the Emperor and the King were accorded in all things as touching the marriage, upon the condition that the Damsel would consent. Then called the Emperor the young Lady to him, and said: O my fair Daughter, I have provided for thæ, that a King shall be thy husband if thou list consent, therefore tell me what answer thou wilt give to this. Then said she to her Father, it pleaseth me well: but one thing dear Father I intreat of you,

peror hath made such a Law, that every blin
man shall have an hundred shillings of hi
treasure: therefore let us cast lots among u
and to whom the lot falleth, let his eyes b
put out, and so he may go to the Emperor
Palace, and get an hundred shillings to dis
charge us. Now this counsel liked them
well, so they cast lots; and the lot fell o
him that gave the counsel, and his fellow
immediately put out his eyes.

And when he was blind, he went to th
Emperors Palace, and asked an hundre
shillings of the Steward, according to th
Emperors Decree. Dear Friend, said th
Steward, thou didst see with both thine eye
a while since, thou also understandest th
Law amiss: for the Law is made for me
that are blind through infirmities, or by th
will of God, but the other day thou hadst th
sight in the Tavern, and hast wilfully lo
it. Therefore go to the Tavern again t
thy fellows, and discharge what thou owest,
for hers gettest thou not a Farthing. Then
went this wretched man forth, and told hi
fellows of the Stewards answer, and wit
that came in the Vintner and dispoiled them
of all their cloaths, and beat them, and thus
drove them with shame out of the City: An
so were they never after seen there.

The

The Moral.

Dear Friends, this Emperor is our Saviour Christ, who ordained a Law, that every blind man should have an hundred shillings of his Treasure. The blind man betokeneth every sinner, who sinneth through infirmity, or the intising of the Devil, the World and the flesh, and shall receive an hundred shillings, if he be inwardly repentant of his sins: that is, he shall have an hundred times more joy, according to the Scripture, saying he shall receive an hundred times more joy if ye repent and turn from sin, and ye shall have everlasting life. These men that came to the Tavern to drink Wine, be sinners, who often times come to the Tavern of our Adversary the Devil, to drink of his carnal appetites, that is, they were consumed and wasted away all Spiritual Vertues, which they received at ỳ Sacrament of Baptisme. Where the devil our enemy dispoileth them of all their good deeds that ever they have wrought before. They cast lots, that is, they have among them the custome of sin, and this evil of sin falleth on such as are unthankful and merciless: and such a man wilfully becomes wilful, a foul sinner like Judas, that betrayed our Lord without any sugestion or inticing. Therefore such men sin most grievously. When they come before the Steward,

with some profit Corporal or Spiritual: and then ought he to be presented before the Emperor: This Focus paid two pence to the Father, and so we should pay to our Father of Heaven two pence, that is honour and love, for when we were Children of wretchedness, and in bondage, Almighty God sent down to the earth his Son to redæm us, according to St. Iohn, the Evangelist, saying, God loved the World so well, that he gave his only begotten Son for the Salvation of the World. Also this Focus lent two pence to his Son: that is, every Christian man ought to lend to the Son of God, our Lord Jesus Christ, true and unfeigned faith, and fruitful good Works and Dæds in our life, and he will repay us again at the day of doom with his heavenly mercy, when Soul and Body shall be glorified, and that he is our brother may be proved by the Text of Isaiah, saying, A Child is born to us. This Focus lost two pence to his Wife: his Wife betokens the fleshly upon whom thou losest two pence, that is, unlawful love and consent to sin, because the flesh is contrary to the Spirit, and is ever subject to sin. This Focus also spent two pence on himself: by the first peny ye shall understand penitance whereat the Angels in Heaven do great rejoyce: by the second penny ye shall under-

stand

stand perfect perseverance in amendment of life: for he that abideth to the end shall be saved. And he that spendeth well these two pence shal obtain everlasting life, unto which bring us our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

The Argument.

Man being blind through sin, and either by infirmity of frail flesh, or suggestion trespassing with evil and lewd company, though God of his mercy be favourable unto him in his life time by reason of the aforesaid respect, yet if he accustomedly walk on forward in this worldly wickedness, his wilful blindness shall not excuse him, but accuse him in the day of Judgment, most grievously to have offended God, in abusing his mercy offered, and therefore the less worthy to have the reward of the simple Soul, that repentantly and with modesty liveth to the fruition of everlasting bliss.

The thirteenth History.

SOmetime in Rome dwelt a noble Emperor which among all other vertues loved best mercy: Wherefore he ordained a Law, that every blind man should have an hundred shillings by the year, of his treasure. It befel on a day, that certain men came to a Tavern to drink Wine, and that these men had sitten in the Tavern three dayes, the fourth day they were greatly in debt for the wine: wherefore the Vintner came to them and demanded Money for his Wine. Then said one of the Drinkers, Sirs, the Em-

if it might please you to grant me: I have vowed to keep my Virginity, & not to marry this seven years, therefore dear Father, I beseech you for all the love that is between your gracious Fatherhood and me, that you name no man to be my Husband till these seven years be ended, and then I shall be ready in all things to fulfil your will. Then said the Emperor, sith it is so that thou hast thus vowed. I will not break thy Vow, but when these seven years be expired, thou shalt have the King of Hungary to thy Husband.

When the Emperor sent forth his Letters to the King of Hungary, praying him if it might please him to stay seven years for the love of his Daughter, and then he should speed without fail. Herewith the King was pleased and content to stay the prefixed day.

And when the seven years were ended save a day the young Lady stood in her Chamber Window, and wept sore, saying: Woe and alas, as to morrow my Love promised to be with me again from the Holy Land: and also the King of Hungary to morrow will be here to marry me, according to my Fathers promise: and if my Love comes not at a certain hour, then am I utterly deceived of the inward love I bear to him.

When

When the day came, the King hasted toward the Emperor to marry his Daughter, and was royally arrayed in Purple. And while the King was riding on his way, there came a Knight riding on his way, who said, I am of the Empire of Rome and now am lately come from the Holy Land, and I am ready to do you the best Service I can. And as they rode talking by the way, it began to rain so fast, that all the Kings Apparel was sore wet: Then said the Knight: My Lord ye have done foolishly, for as much as ye brought not with you your house: then said the King: Why speakest thou so? My house is large and broad, and made of stones, and mortar, how should I bring that with me my house? thou speak'st like a fool. When this was said, they rode on till they came to a great deep water, and the King smote his horse with his spurs, and leapt into the water, so that he was almost drowned. When the Knight saw this, and was over on the other side of the Water without peril, and he said to the King: Ye were in peril, and therefore ye did foolishly, because ye brought not with you your Bridge. Then said the King, thou speakest strangely, my Bridge is made of Lime, and stone, and containeth in quality more than half a Mile: how should I then bear with me my bridg?

there-

this Cloak is understood Charity, as th
Apostle saith: Charity covereth a multitud
of sins: but many men have not this Cloak
wherefore they are wet with the Rain o
Pride, Avarice and Lechery. This Kin
also was almost drowned, because he lacke
his Bridge, that is perfect Faith: for as w
see that no men pass over a great water
broad and deep without a Bridge, or som
other thing that is able to bear him: Righ
so, without Faith it is impossible to pleas
God: for Christ saith, If ye have faith as
grain of Mustard-seed, then you may sa
to the Hills remove out of your places, an
they shall remove. But many of us no
adays have very feeble Faith, and there
fore do suddenly fall into the clay of despe
ration, and by deadly sins oftentimes offen
God. Also the King had not brought wit
him his Father and Mother: By the Fathe
which is cause of Generation, is understo
Humility, without which there is no Vert
in any man, and thereto accordeth St. Gr
gory, saying: He that gathereth all orb
Vertues without Humility, is like a M
that casteth Dust into the Winde. B
Mother betokeneth Hope: Therefo
he that will obtain everlasting blesse
life, must have the Cloak of Charity, t
Bridge of Faith, and a Father of meek

nes, and a Mother of Hope, as the Apostle saith.

Also this Knight went the narrow way, and the King the broad way: for he that will be saved must go a streight way: that is, the way of abstinence: Alms-Deeds, Charity and Repentance. Of the which way speaketh the Apostle. The way is straight that leadeth unto everlasting Life. But many men go the other way which leadeth to Hell, that is by the way of the fleshly lust: and such men go out of the way of everlasting Life. Therefore study we to walk by narrow way, that thereby we may obtain everlasting life.

The Argument.

By the History is figured, as appeareth in the Moral, the Soul of every good Christian, held of him as his Daughter: but being seduced, carried away and defiled by Satan her foul enemy; she is reduced by the help and valiant prowess of her heavenly Champion Christ Jesus, unto her former Habitation. Yet man being one grateful to his Redeemer, forgetteth his duty, and for good rewardeth evil to his Champion Christ Jesus, delivering him to be judged by the Law, as an Offender: but when the Champion avoucheth what he hath done for man and his Soul, then he is with shame of his ingratitude constrained to remorse, and call for grace to repent and amend his life, that by the death of his Champion Christ; he may obtain eternal Life.

The fifteenth History.

SOmetime dwelt in Rome a noble Emperor named Agias, which had retained into him

man, for the house whereof he spake was a Cloak, and therefore he said to you, that you did foolishly, because you came without your cloak, then your clothes had not been spotted with Rain. Then said the King, when he had ridden a little further, we came to a deep water, and I smote my horse with my Spurs, and I was almost drowned, but he rid through the water without any peril, then said he to me, you did foolishly for that you brought not with you your Bridge. Verily said the Emperor, he saith truth, for he called the Squires the Bridge, that should have ridden before you, and assayed the deepness of the Water. Then said the King, we rode further, and at the last he prayed me to Dine with him. And when he had Dined, he said, I did unwisely, because I brought not with me my Father and Mother. Truely said the Emperor, he was a wise man, and saith: for he called your Father and Mother, Bread and Wine and other victuals. Then said the King: we rode further, and anon after he asked me leave to go from me, and I asked earnestly whither he went: and he answered again, and said: this day seven years, I left a Net in a private place, and now I will ride to see it, and if it be broken and torn, then will I

leave

leave it, but if it be as I left it, then shall it be unto me right precious. When the Emperor heard this, he cryed with a loud voice and said: O ye my Knights & servants, come ye with me spedily unto my Daughters Chamber, for surely that is the net of which he spake; and forthwith his Knights & Servants went unto his Daughters Chamber, & found her not, for the aforesaid Knight had taken her with him. And thus the King was deceived of the Damsel. And he went home again to his own Country ashamed.

The Moral.

Dear Friends this Emperor is our Lord Jesus Christ, and his fair Daughter is everlasting life, which the Emperor had ordained for Kings, Knights and other men; The Knight that loved this young Lady, is every good Christian soul, which holdeth himself not worthy to come into the sight of God unto such joy, as the Apostle saith, The sufferings of this time are not worthy to attain to the glory that is to come. This Knight was seven years absent from his love: like as a good Christian all dayes of his life should labour and travel in fulfilling the seven works of Mercy. By the King that came without a Cloak in the rain, is to be understood, some mighty men in this World, which have Cloaks to cover all their other cloaths. By

this

therefore thou speakest foolishly. Well sa
the Knight, my foolishness may turn thee
wisdom. When the King had ridden a litt
further, he asked the Knight what time
day it was. Then said ỳ Kt. if any man ha
list to eat, it is time of the day to eat, ther
fore my Lord, pray take a modicum with m
for that is no dishonour to you, but great h
nor to me before the states of this Empir
Then said the King, I will gladly eat wi
thee. They sate both down in a fair Ui
Garden, and there dined together, both t
King and the Knight. And when dinner w
done, and that the King had washed, t
Knight said unto the King, my Lord, ye ha
done foolishly, for that ye brought
with you your Father and Mother. T
said the King, what sayest thou? My Fat
is dead, and my Mother is old and may
travel, how should I then bring them w
me? therefore to say the truth, a foli
man than thou art did I never hear. T
said the Knight, every work is praised at
end.

When the Knight had ridden a little f
ther, nigh to the Empetors Palace, he
ked leave to go from him, for he knew a n
rer way to the Palace, to the young La
that he might come first, and carry her a
with him. Then said the King, I p

hée tell me by what place thou purposest to
ide? Then said the Knight I shall tell you
he Truth: This day seven years I left a
Net in a place, and now I purpose to visit
, and draw it to me, and if it be whole,
hen will I take it to me, and kéep it as a
recious Jewel, if it be broken, then will
leave it: and when he had thus said,
e took his leave of the King, and rode
rth, but the King kept the broad high
ay.

When the Emperor heard of ye Kings com-
ng, he went towards him with a great com-
any, & royally received him, causing him to
hift his wet cloaths, and to put on fresh Ap-
arel. And when the Emperor and the King
ere set at meat, the Emperor welcomed
im with all the chear and solace that he
ould. And when he had eaten, the Em-
eror asked tydings of the King: My Lord
id he, I shall tell you what I have heard
is day by the way. There came a Knight
me, and reverently saluted me: and anon
ter there fell a great Rain, and greatly
oiled my Apparel. And anon the Knight
id: Sir, ye have done foolishly, for that
ou brought not with you your House. Then
id the Emperor: what cloathing had the
night on? A Cloak quoth the King. Then
id the Emperor, surely that was a Wise
man,

him a Knight named Gerard, which was worthy Warriour, nevertheleſs he was a Lamb in the Emperors Court, but in the Field he was like a Lyon. This Emperor had a fair Daughter, whom the ſtrong and mighty Earl of Peleſter carried by force away and defiled, which more diſpleaſed the Emp. then the carrying her away. Therefore he called unto him his Counſel, & ſaid: Dear friends, the violence done to me in the flowring of my Daughter is not unknown to you, and therefore I purpoſe to give battel to the Earl: wherefore I pray you to be ready at a day, that ye may proceed with me in battel. And they ſaid: Sir we be ready to live and dye with you in battel.

When the appointed day of battel came they met on both ſides, and a cruel ſharp conflict was proſecuted on both ſides, and almoſt all on the Emperors part was ſlain. And as the Emperor himſelf was forcibly aſſayled, the Knight Gerard put himſelf among the Enemies before the Emperor, & fought manfully, and ſo the Emperor eſcaped, and the Knight abode and ſlew the Earl, nevertheleſs the Knight had divers wounds; notwithſtanding this, he abode ſtill till the blood ran down to his foot. And when his enemies ſaw that the Earl was ſlain, they fled, and the Knight with his people followed on the

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chase till they came to the place where the Emperors Daughter was, and led her with him. And thus with triumph and victory he returned again to to the Emperor. For the which victory, and re-obtaining of the Emperors Daughter, he was greatly praised of all people. Not long after it befel, that this Knight had a Sute in the Emperors Court, wherefore the Knight came unto the Emperor, and prayed him meekly to be favourable to his cause: and furthermore desired him to do reason touching his honest demand.

When the Emperor had heard him, he called to him a Judge, and said: Sir, Our Will is, that you do all equity unto this Knight. And when the Knight heard this, he cryed with a loud voice: Alas, alas, who ever heard of such an Emperor? Thou wert (said he) in battel, where thy head should have been smitten off, and I in mine own person (and none other man) put my self in jeopardy for thee: and now thou hast assigned another man to be judge in my Cause: alas that ever thou wert born; and with that word the Knight put off all his cloaths, & shewed the wounds that he had received in the battel unto all the men that were there present, and said; Lo, what I have suffered for thee, O Emperor; I did put no other man in my stead, and now thou assignest another man

in my cause. Soothly I say to thée, that I never served such a Lord before.

When the Emperor heard this, being almost confounded in himself, he said: O dear Friend, all that thou sayest is truth, thou savedst me from death, thou didst re-obtain my Daughter again, and for my sake thou hast suffered many wounds: verily it is right that I in my own person come down and make an end of thy cause, so as may be to thy content, and to mine honour.

And then the Emperor laboured very busily in this matter, and made thereof an end according to the Knights request: wherefore all men greatly commended the Emperor.

The Moral.

Dear Friends, this Emperor may be called every Christian man, or else all mankind, which had a fair Daughter, that is to say, the soul, made to the similitude of God. This Earl betokeneth the Devil, which carrieth away, deflloureth by sin the soul of man, through eating the fruit of the forbiden tree: wherefore all mankind was in thraldom, till a strong and Valiant Knight came and put himself on the Cross to suffer death, as a Redeemer of mankind from the Devil. For if that had not been, we had been all partakers of thraldome everlastingly: and this Knight

educed and re-obtained the soul of man unto
he Church, wherefore he suffered many
reat wounds in his Body. And now this
knight, that is, our Lord Jesus Christ hath
matter to do among us, that is, to find us
erfect faith: wherefore he calleth on us
aily, that we should be ready at all times,
aying thus, Apocalyps the third: Loe I
and and knock at the door, if any man will
pen to me, I will come in and sup with him.
But many men do as the Emperor did, the
which appointed the Knight another Judge
han himself, for now adays there be some
men that will do no repentance for the love of
im, which assigned no other man but him-
elf to fight for us. And therefore against un-
hankful persons, it shall be said thus. Lo,
e suffered for us on the Cross, dispoiled of
ll his cloathing, and shewed to us all his
wounds that he suffered.

Be we therefore thankful unto God for
all his Graces, and be content that we may
uffer for his Love some sorrowful repen-
ance. For he that suffereth pain for the love
f God in this Life, shall receive a hundred
imes more Reward in the Life everlasting.
Unto the which our Lord Jesus Christ
ring all mankind. Amen.

The Argument.

The Soul of man is here warned to eſchew the pleaſant baits, and ſubtil crafts of the Devil, that ſhe yield not to his allurement leſt he get the vantage of this mortal courſe from her, and bereave her of her joyes, in the life to come.

The ſixteenth Hiſtory.

THere dwelt ſometime in Rome a wiſe Emperor named Pompey, which had a vertuous Daughter named Aglas. This Damoſel had many endowments above all other women in that Empire.

Firſt, ſhe was fair & gracious in the ſight of every man: alſo ſhe was ſwift in running, that not any might overtake her by a right Race. When the Emperor underſtood theſe two properties in his Daughter, he was right joyful: Wherefore he proclaimed throughout all his Empire, that what man, poor or rich would run with his Daughter, ſhould have her to wife, with great riches, if he could over-run her, and come ſooner to the mark than ſhe: and if ſhe over-run him, and came ſooner to the mark than he, his head ſhould be ſmitten off.

When the States of that Empire, as Dukes, Earls, Barons and Knights, heard this cry, they offered themſelves one after another to run with her, but ever this young Lady over-ran them all: wherefore they loſt their heads, according to the Law.

That

That time there were a poor man dwelling in Rome, which thought within himself, I am a poor man, & come of poor kindred, there is a common cry made, that what man soever can outrun the Emperors Daughter, by any means, shall be promoted to great honor and riches: now therefore if I might overrun her by any manner of way, I should not only be promoted to great honour, but also all my kindred. Then this poor man provided himself of three things, whereby he might win her; First, he made a Garland of red Roses and white. Secondly, he made a rich Girdle of silk cunningly wrought. Thirdly, he made a Purse of Silk, embroydered with precious stones, and within the Purse was a Ball of three colours, and upon this Ball was written this Posey, Whoso playeth with me, shall not be weary of my play. Then put he these Three things in his bosome, and went forth to the Palace Gate, crying and saying: Come forth fair Lady, for I am ready to run with you, and to fulfil the Law in all things.

When the Emperour heard this, he commanded his Daughter to run with him. This young Lady went to her Chamber Window, and when she saw him, she despised him, and said: I have overcome many worthy Knights, and now must I run

with a Churl nevertheleſs I will fulfil m
Fathers Commandment.

Anon the Damſel arrayed her for to ru
with him. And at the laſt they run togethe
and within ſhort ſpace the Damoſel got fa
before him. When the Jugler ſaw this, h
threw forth his Garland of Flowers befo
her, and when the Damſel beheld and ſaw t
ſhe ſtoped down and took it up, and ſet it up
on her head, and that while the Jugler wen
before her. But when the young Damoſ
ſaw this, ſhe wept ſore, and for ſorrow ſh
threw the Garland into a ditch, and ran af
ter him, and at the laſt ſhe overtook him, an
lift up her right hand, and gave him a buffet
ſaying: abide thou wretch, it beſæmet
not thy Fathers Son to have me to Wife
And then this Lady did over-run him, an
went before him a great ſpace. And whe
the Jugler ſaw this, he took the Girdle ou
of his boſome, and threw it before her. An
when ſhe ſaw that, ſhe ſtoped down and too
it up, and girded her therewith, and th
while the Jugler gat before her again. Not
when ſhe ſaw that, ſhe was vexed, and too
the Girdle, and with her teeth tare it in thre
and then threw it from her: then ſhe ran
laſt after him: and at the laſt overtook him,
and then ſhe gave him a great blow, ſaying:
O wretch, thinkeſt thou to overcome me:

and

and with that she ran before him again. The Jugler was slie and subtle, and kept the Purse till they were nær the mark, and then he threw it before her, and anon she stoped down and took it up, and opened it, and took out the Ball, and read the Posey: Who playeth with me, shall never be weary of my play; And she began to play, and continued so long in playing, till that the Jugler was before her at the mark. And thus he won the Emperors Daughter.

The Moral.

Dear Friends, this Emperor is our Saviour Jesus Christ, and his fair Daughter is the soul of man, which was made clean by the efficacy of Baptism, and was also swift in running, that is in vertue, while she was in her cleanness, so that no deadly sin might overcome her. This Jugler that is so subtle and crafty, is the Devil, which studieth day and night to deceive Innocents. He provided him of three things. First, of the Garland which betokeneth Pride: for why? a Garland of flowers is not set upon the arm, nor upon the foot, but upon the head that it may be seen: so pride would be seen. Wherefore St. Augustine saith, when thou seest a Proud man be not afraid to call him the Son of the Devil; Do thou therefore as the maiden to, be angry at thy sins, and cast off the

Garland of Pride, into the Ditch of Repentance, and ſo ſhalt thou give the Devil a buffet, and overcome him. But when this Juggler, that is, our ghoſtly enemy, the Devil, ſeeth himſelf overcome in one ſin, then he returneth & tempteth a man in another ſin, & caſteth before man the girdle of Letchery; & alas, there be many girded with this girdle of Letchery: againſt which girdle ſpeaketh St. Gregory, ſaying: Gird we our loyns with the Girdle of Chaſtity, for whoſoever is girt with this Girdle, ſhall not loſe the hope of Life. Then caſteth the Jugler (that is the Devil) the Purſe with the Ball. The Purſe that is open above, and cloſe under, betokens the heart, which evermore ſhould be cloſe in the bottom againſt earthly things, and open above to Heavenly joy: and the two ſtrings that open and ſhut the Purſe, betoken the love of God, and our Neighbours: the Ball which is round and moveable, to every part of his difference, betokeneth covetouſneſs, which moveth ever both in young and old, and therefore the Poſey was true that was written on the Ball. Whoſo playeth with me, that is with Covetouſneſs, ſhall never be ſatisfied. Therefore ſaith Seneca: When all ſins wax old, then Covetouſneſs waxeth young. Therefore let us take heed that we play not with this Ball of Covetouſneſs,

ousnes, and then without doubt we shall obtain through the merit of Christ, the bliss of heaven that never shall end. Unto the which bring us that shed his precious blood for us.

The Argument.

The Preaching of Gods Word and every good Prayer, is a sweet sounding melody in the ears of God, and hath a promised reward of God, yet there is now and then stirred up in us, some let thereof by our whistling Adversary the Devil, and we are hindred for a time, until by the Providence of God, Godly Preachers be sent forth, which with the hook of Gods Word do win again our lost felicity, and so recover the fall of such Souls as were seduced and led away, into joyful and perpetual fellowship of the blessed Angels of Heaven.

The seventeenth History.

SOmetime dwelt in Rome a Noble Emperor & a wise, named Theodosius, which loved greatly the musick of the Harp & likewise the pastime of Hunting. It befel upon a day as this Emperor hunted in the Forrest he heard a swæt noise of a Harp, so that through the swætnes thereof, he was almost ravished of his wits, wherefore he sought about the Forrest to find that Melody, and at the last he espied at the end of the Forrest a poor man sitting beside the water playing on a harp full swætly. Then said the Emperor: Good friend, procædeth this melody from thy harp or no? The poor man answered & said: My reverend Lord, I shall tell you the truth.

Here

Here beside this water, my Wife, my Child and I have dwelt this thirty years, and God hath given me such a gift, that when I play on my Harp, I make such melody, that the fishes of this water come out to my hand, so that therewith my Wife, my Child, and I have bẽn sustained in greatly plenty. But alas, sometime on the other side of this water there cometh a whistler, and he whistleth so swẽtly, that many times the fishes forsake me and go to him: therefore my reverend Lord I crave your help against this whistler. Then said the Emperor, I shal give thẽ good help, I have here in my purse a golden Hook which I will give thée, take it, and bind it fast to the end of a Rod, & put a Worm upon the Hook, then cast thy rod into the water and play upon the Harp, and when thou perceivest the fish to bite on the Bait, draw them up to the Land with that Hook, and then thy whistling shall not avail. When the poor man heard this he rejoyced greatly, and did as he had taught him. And when this poor man began to play upon his Harp, the fishes came to the Bait, and then he took them up with his Hook, and lived thereby in better estate long time, and at last ended his life in peace and rest.

The Moral.

Dear Friends, this Emperor betokeneth

our

our L. Jesus Christ, which greatly delighteth to hurt the soul of mankind in the Forrest that is the holy Church. He loveth also the melody of the Harp, that is, he loveth much them that teach the Holy Word of God. This poor man that sate by the waters side, betokeneth the Prelates of the Church, and the Preachers of the Word of God, which ought alway to be resident in their Charge, and not in the World, that is, they should not set their delight on Worldly things. The Preachers ought to have the Harp of Holy Scripture, wherewith they may praise and honor God, and also therewith draw out of this world sinners. Therefore saith the Psalmist thus, Praise the Lord upon the Harp, sing to the Lord with a Psalm of Thanksgiving; Psal. 98. 6. But now adays the Preacher may say, Alas, for when I preach and teach the Holy Scripture, the Devil cometh and whistleth so sweetly, that the sinners draw to him, and will not fear the word of God: but they turn themselves only to the delight of sin. The Devil deceaveth mankind by diders ways.

First in the time of Preaching he maketh some to sleep, and them that he cannot make to sleep he causeth them to talk and clatter: and them that he cannot make to clatter, he maketh them so dull that they cannot under-

stand

ſtand what the Preacher ſaith: and then that he cannot beguile by theſe means, he putteth into them buſineſs, and cauſeth them to go out of the Church. Behold how many wayes the Devil hath to deceive mankind, and to hinder the Word of God. Therefore every Prelate, and every Preacher ought to have the Golden Hook of Gods word againſt this whiſtling, by which they may draw ſinners out of this World up to Heaven. Unto the which bring us our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, Amen.

The Argument.

Mans Soul the Daughter of our Saviour, is right dear unto him, and though he be careful for the confirming of her in the ſtate of ſincere life, yet ſhe ſeduced by the ſuggeſtion of the Fleſh, which being a grievous tranſgreſſor, is yet by earneſt repentance, and amendment of life, brought by the Soul unto dutiful obedience towards God and man, that henceforwards continuing they together, may be partakers of everlaſting bleſſedneſs.

The eighteenth Hiſtory.

THere dwelt ſometime in Rome a mighty Emperor named Ptolomeus, which had but one Child a Daughter, whom he loved ſo much, that day and night ſhe was guarded with armed Knights: & over theſe Knights he ordained a Controuler, to inſtruct them how they ſhould do. He ordained alſo a ſteward for to guide his houſhold. And when all this was done, on a night as he lay in his bed,

bed, he resolved that he would go visit ỳ Holy Land. And when all things were ready for his journey according to his desire, he called unto him his Steward, and said: My trusty servant, I purpose now to go sée the Holy Land, and therefore I commit my Daughter to thy kéeping, and charge thée, that she lack nothing, but that she have all manner of joy that appertaineth to such a Virgin. Moreover I leave to thy kéeping five Knights, that be her Guard, & I charge thée that they lack nothing that is fitting for them. Also I leave with thée my grey-hound, commanding that thou nourish and féed him as hitherto he hath béen: and if thou fulfil all this that I have said, thou shalt at my coming again receive a great reward. Then said the Steward: My Lord, in all that I may I will fulfil your command. Anon the Emperor took his journey toward the City of Jerusalem, and the Steward a long time kept well the Emperors command, and the charge given him.

But at the last it befell upon a day, that his Steward had espyed this young Lady walking alone in the Orchard, with whose love he was suddenly surprised; wherefore straightway, against her will he defloured her; & when he had committed sin with her, he gave her ill language, and hated her more than ever he loved her before, and drave her

out

out of the Palace: wherefore the Damſel by this means being driven to neceſſity and great poverty, went from dor to dor, and begged her bread. But when the Knights that were her kæpers ſaw this, they reproved ſhamefully the Steward of this inhumane dæd. Then the Steward waxed wrath, and for great hate that he had in his heart, he ſpoiled the Knights of their goods, and drove them from the Palace. And when they were thus robbed and exiled, ſome for lack of living became Thieves, and ſome Mankillers, ſo that through this inconveniency they wrought great harm.

Not long after there came tydings that the Emperor was arrived in that Land, coming homeward: And when the Steward heard this, he was greatly troubled and moved in himſelf, and ſaid: It cannot be but I ſhall be accuſed for my treſpaſs that I have commited againſt the Emperors commandment, and he hath ever bæn my good merciful Lord therefore better it were, that I go and mæt him with all lowlineſs and humility, & accuſe my ſelf unto him, and ask him Mercy, than that any other ſhould prevent me, and accuſe me to my Lord for treaſon. Then the Steward ſtraight put off his cloaths, ſave his hoſen and his ſhirt, and took thræ ropes with him in his right hand, & bare-foot went, and

mei

ret the Emperor. Now when the Emperor
an espyed him coming afar off in such man-
er he wondred greatly. And when the
teward was come so nær that he might
eak to the Emperor, he fell down on his
nées and saluted him reverently: Then said
he Emperor, what is befallen thée, that thou
métest me after such a sort? for in that thou
rt my Steward, thou shouldest have met
e with a great company of noble Knights,
Oh my Lord, quoth he, there is a heavy
ance befallen me, for which it behoves me
mét your Highness thus. Then said the
mperor what chance is befallen thée? My
everend Lord, quoth he, it behoves you first
ask me, why I bring with me these thrée
pes. Then said the Emperor why bearest
ou these thrée Ropes in thy hand? Then
swered the Steward, and said: This first
ope I bring with me to bind my hands
d fét so hard, till the blood burst out on
ther side, for that I have well deserved:
second Rope I bring with me, to draw
at the Horse tail upon the pavement, till
bones be bare without flesh, for that it is
t due to me for the great treason I have
ne against you. The third Rope I have
ught is to hang me with, upon an high
allows, so long that the Birds light on
y head, and upon my body, féed themselves

on

on my flesh, for these things are due to for
Trespassers & breakers of the Law as I am
Yet Oh my Reverend Lord have mercy
me, for I dare not acknowledg my trespas
until I have obtained your pardon. The
said the Emperor, I see in thee great contri
tion, therefore tel me thy trespass, and sure
thou shalt find Mercy and Grace. Alas, alas
then said the Steward, I have defiled thin
only Daughter, and have driven her out
the Palace, so that now in great necessit
she beggeth from door to door, I have al
dispoiled thy Knights of all their goods, a
now some of them in regard they lack livin
become thieves and robbers, and some mer
killers, and the Controuler of the Knigh
I have slain, but I fed thy Grey-hound wi
the best meat as long as I might, and ty
him with a chain, yet at the last he brake h
chain, and went his way, so that now he ru
neth about the Countrey.

When the Emperor heard this, he wa
sore astonished, and said: Hast thou defil
red my Daughter whom I loved so well, a
also dispoiled my Knights, and slain the
Controuler; and the Grey-hound, which
loved so well, of whom I gave thee charg
is he gone also? Surely, were it not that
had forgiven thee, and that thou hast hum
bled thy self so much, I would have put the

the vilest death that could be thought: notwithstanding depart hence forthwith, and bring again my Daughter, that thou maist marry her, & if any harm hereafter befall to her, through thy default then will I double thy punishment. Also bring again my Kts. and restore to them their goods, and set them in their state and offices as they were before. Also seek diligently for my Grey-hound, till thou find him & make him fast, so that hereafter in thee there be no fault found. Now when the steward heard this, he bowed down with most humble submission, and thanked the Emperor for his great mercy, and then he went forth, and sought diligently through all the Empire, until he found the Emperors Daughter and the Knights, and the Grey-hound, and brought them home again. And after he had married the young Lady, and restored again the Knights goods, he ended his life in peace.

The Moral.

Dear friends, this Emperor betokeneth our Lord Jesus Christ. His daughter betokeneth the soul of man, made after the similitude of our Lord God. The 5 knights are the 5 wits armed with the vertue of Baptism, for the preservation of the soul. The Controuler of the Knights is Reason, which ought to rule the wits. The greyhound is the flesh of man:

and the Steward is every man, to whom God hath given a life and soul to kæp, under pain of losing everlasting life. But wretched and wicked man, not remembring what is to come, full often corrupteth and polluteth his Soul with sin, and repelleth her from her Palace of Heaven, & then wandreth she from dor to dor, that is, from sin to sin. He dispoileth these five Knights of their gods, that is, the five Wits, or rather gracious vertues, taking away the natural light from their eyes, giving them bad Counsel, also moving their ears to listen unto slander and backbiting, and so forth of all the other wits; thus some be made Thieves, and some Manslayers. The Master of these five Wits is slain, whensoever man is ruled by Will, and not by Reason. The Greyhound, that is the Flesh, wherein a man delighteth, was led and bound with a Chain of reason, but breaking out, full oft doth much harm.

The coming again of this Emperor from the Holy Land, betokens the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ at the day of doom to judg all mankind. Wherefore let us as the steward did, accuse our selves of our sins first, lest the Devil & the world accuse us, then it is too late to ask Mercy: therefore put we off our cloaths betime, that is, our sinful life, and take we three Ropes in our hands. The first

Rope

Rope that should bind our hands and feet, betokeneth the Rope of true repentance, which not onely ought to bind our hands and feet, but also our heart within us, and our outward conversation, in such austerity of life, that is, that sin might void it self. Hereto accordeth Ezekiel saying thus: Whensoever the sinful man doth repent himself, he shall be forgiven. The second Rope for to draw the Trespasser, is acknowleging of our Sins, which would draw us from the beginning of our life, unto our lives end, by a perfect reconciliation of our selves to God & man, unto the time that the flesh was fallen to the bones, that is till the lust of the flesh be turned away by the stones of repentance. For even as the stone by nature is hard, right so the way of repentance ought to be hard. The third Rope that should hang the fellon, is the Rope of amendment of life: For it is written in Holy Scripture, There is more joy in Heaven over one sinner that returneth unto the Lord in time, than over ninety and nine just persons.

Like as the Steward brought again the Emperors Daughter, so it behoveth us to seek about by a fruitful Faith, until we find again our lost Soul, and to bring her again to the Church, to rule well our five Wits, to feed our Grey-hound we should, and make

our life so clean and pure, that we fall not again to sin, for fear that it fortune to us worse, and that we have no leisure to ask mercy again at our nædes; and if we fulfil all this truely unto our lives end, without doubt we shal obtain everlasting life. To the which our Lord bring us all. Amen

The Argument.

The violating our innocency in not imitating the Law of God, here described, which being adjudged after the Law, is death, but by the merits of Christ our Saviour, we obtain Salvation.

The nineteenth History.

IN Rome dwelt sometime a mighty Emperor and a wise, named Ensenne, who ordained a Law, that whosoever ravished a Virgin, should be at her discretion, whether she would put him to death, or would take him to her Husband.

It befell after that a man ravished one night two fair Maidens: the first Damosel which he ravished, desired that he should dye, but the second desired him to her Husband. The ravisher was taken and led before the judge, that he might satisfie both these damsels according to the equity of the cause. The first damsel desired his death, according to the Law then said the second, I desire to have him to my Husband: like as thou hast the Law for thee, so in like case I have for me, and also my petition is much better than yours, for

for it is more charitable: therefore methinks in my reason that the Judge should give sentence to the favour & furtherance of my desire. When the judge heard the mercy of the second Damosel, he gave judgement that he should take her to Wife, and so it was done.

The Moral.

Dear Friends, this Emperor betokeneth our Lord Jesus Christ, the Ravisher betokeneth every sinner, which ravisheth ỳ Holy Commandments of God by sin, for the Devil can never overcome man, except he be suffered by the will: For St. Augustine saith, it is not sin, except it be Voluntary. The ravisher also is called before the Justice, when the Soul is departed from the Body: and soon, the first Damosel (Innocency) laid against the sinner, that he ought to dye everlastingly by the Law of righteousness. But the other Maid (that is, Christs merits) alleged for him, how ỳ mercy of God ought to help ỳ hearty Repentance, and acknowleging of sins, which is ỳ high way to everlasting life. Unto the which God bring us all. Amen.

The Argument.

The Mother and the Child of Grace, and of the Reprobate is here declared, and set forth: but which of them shall be saved, and which of them shall be damned, is not yet revealed to the World, until the last and dreadful day of Judgement.

The 20. Hiſtory.

SOmtime there reign'd in Rome a mighty Emperor, and a rich, named Lypodus which took to wife a fair Virgin and gentle, the Daughter of the King of Aſſyria. This young Lady conceived and bare him a Son, and in the birth ſhe died: not long after her decease the Emperor married another wife, and had by her a Son; and immediately after the ſecond Child was born, he ſent them both into ſtrange Country, there to be brought up. Now when the Children had bẽ there long, the Empreſs ſaid: My reverend Lord, ten years be now fully expired ſince I bare my Son, and yet I never ſaw him but once, and that was the firſt day of his birth, therefore I beſeech you my Lord, to ſend for him, to the end, that I may once rejoyce me in his ſight. Then ſaid the Emperor, I have another child by my firſt wife, & if I ſend for thy Son, then muſt I ſend for them both: notwithſtanding, at the Empreſſe requeſt he ſent for them both. And when they were come, they were of paſſing feature, and wel trained up, & ſo paſſing like in al things, that hardly the one might be known from the other, but the Father knew the difference.

Then ſaid the Mother of the ſecond child: my Lord, I pray you tell me which of theſe is my Son. Then the Emperor called to him

that Son that he begat on his first Wife. When the Empress heard this, she gave all care to nourish him, and neglected the other Child. Now when the Emperor saw this, he said? Truely I deceived thee: Without doubt this is not thy Son, but one of them two is thy Son. Then said the Mother, My Lord, I most earnestly entreat you, that you would tel me without dissembling, which of them is my Son. The Emperor answered and said, certainly, I will not tell you, until they be both come to mans estate, and this is my reason: First, I told you that this was your Son, and you cherished him, and forsook that other: and when I told you that this was your Son, then you slightly regarded the first, and cherished the second, therefore my desire is, that thou cherish them both alike, that I may have like joy of them. When the Empress heard this, she cherished them both alike. And when they were both at age, the Emperor made a great Feast, and before all his Nobles he told his wife openly which was her son. Then rejoyced the Empress greatly, and when she had lived a good time, she ended her life in peace and rest.

The Moral.

Dear Friends, this Emperors Son betokeneth those that be chosen to everlasting life, and those that be not chosen. The

mother of them is the Providence of God that nouriſheth them both: therefore our Lord will not that his Providence ſhould let the world know which be choſen, & which be not choſen: For if ſhe knew that, then would ſhe love the one and hate the other, and ſo Charity among us would be overthrown, and we ſhould live in diſcord and ſtrife: but Truth at the day of Judgment ſhall tell to us, which of them ſhall be ſaved, and which of them ſhall be damned. Therefore pray we in this world, that we may come to the everlaſting Feaſt in Heaven. Unto the which God bring us all. Amen.

The Argument.

The ungodly of this World will not take any pains to live vertuouſly, and yet oftentimes they are enriched for the moſt part with the Riches of Fortune, but they are not careful of the Reward laid up for the Righteous in Heaven, neither do they fear the torments of Hell appointed for the Reprobates.

The 21. Hiſtory.

SOmetime there dwelt in Rome a Noble Emperor, named Polinus, which had three Sons whom he loved much. It befell upon a day, when this Emperor lay upon his bed, he bethought him to which of his ſons he might give his Empire after his decease. Then called he to him his three Sons, and ſaid: which of you is moſt ſloathful, he ſhall have

mine

mine Empire after my decease. The first son answered and said: the Empire by reason should be mine, for I am so sloathful, that if my foot were in the fire, I had rather it should be burn't, than I would take it out. Then said the second: I am (quoth he) more fit for the Empire than thou, for though there were a Cord about my Neck wherewith I should be hanged, and if I had a sharp Sword in my hand, for very sloth I would not once put forth my hand, to cut the cord to save my life. And when these two Brethren had thus said, then the third spake for himself, thus: I ought to be Emperor before you both, for I exceed you in sloth, and I will prove it thus: I lie upright in my bed, and there drop-eth water upon mine eyes, and for very sloth I will not move my head: neither to the right side of the bed, nor to the left, to save my self. When the Emperor heard this, he bequeathed his Empire unto the youngest, as to the slothfullest of the Brethren.

The Moral.

Dear Friends, this Emperor betokeneth the Devil, which is the Lord and Father over the ungodly in this world. By the first son is understood, a man that chanceth into evil company, by which he falleth into misdemeanour, and had rather be burnt in the fire of sin than depart from them. The

second

ſecond ſon betokeneth him that knows himſelf to be faſt bound with the bond of ſin wherewith he's to be hang'd on the Gallows of Hell, and is ſo ſlothful, that he will not cut it away with the Sword of Repentance. By the third Son is underſtood a man that hearts of the joyes of Heaven, & the pains of Hell, yet will not move himſelf to the right nor to the left ſide to forſake his ſins, for fear of eternal pain: ſuch a man without doubt, for his ſloth ſhall receive the Kingdome of Hell, from which kep us our Lord Jeſus. Amen.

The Argument.

Mans Soul as a Captain General, with his Forces of Armed Vertues, fight againſt a ſtrong City, the World, wherein is the Caſtle of Vanity, and in that are poyſoned Forces of ſin, as mortal enemies of mankind, againſt whom well to fight, is the means to obtain the Victory, and triumph everlaſtingly.

The 22. Hiſtory.

ALexander the mighty Emperor ſometime ruled, who beſieged a City of the King of Egypt with a great Hoaſt nevertheleſs, this Emperor loſt many worthy Kts without any hurt or ſtroke. And thus from day to day his people died ſuddenly, whereat this Alexander wondered greatly, and was ſorrowful therefore in his mind, he cal'd unto him his wiſeſt Philoſophers that might be found, & demanded of them why his people dye

dyed thus suddenly without any wounds? the Philosophers answered and said: My Lord, its no wonder, for upon the walls of that Castle within the City is a cockatrice, through whose sight your men dye, for they are infected with a venome that cometh from her eyes, and thereupon they dye.

Then this Alexander asked if there were any remedy against the Cockatrice. The Philosophers answered, and said: My Lord, there is good remedy, for if it please you to set up a large Mirrour of clear glass over against the Cockatrice, betwéen your Host & the wall of the City, when the cóckatrice beholdeth her self in the Mirrour the deadly nature of the venemous sight shall return again to her self, and thus she shall dye, & your men thereby shall be saved. Then the Emperor did as the Philosophers counselled him, and set up forthwith a large Mirrour of excellent clear glass, and thus was the Cockatrice slain, and the Emperor with his Hoast made an assault on the City, and obtained the Victory.

The Moral.

Dear Friends, this Emperor may be called every Christian man, which ought to gather an Hoast of Vertue, for without Vertue no man can fight Spiritually. The City against which ye shall fight, is the World, wherein

wherein there is an high Castle, that is, Vanity of Vanities, and all is but Vanity. In this Vanity standeth the Cockatrice, that is, pride of life, desire of the eyes, the lust of the flesh, wherefore this pride infecteth so many, that they dye in sin everlastingly: wherefore the best remedy against this pride is the consideration of our uncleanness, how we came naked into the world. And if it be asked why a man is proud, it may be answered thus: for default of clothing himself with vertues: what shall we do when we dye thus ghostly, but set up a pure mirrour of conscience that by that conscience, we may consider our slidings, & our brittleness, as in a glass, where we may see our default? And if we do thus, without doubt the Cockatrice, that is pride of life, desire of the eyes, and lust of the flesh, shall be utterly destroyed, and we shall obtain the victory of this worldly City, and by Christs merits win everlasting life. Unto the which he bring us all, Amen.

The Argument.

The Soul of man being conversant in the Body with the Flesh, she seeketh by sinister means to overthrow the Soul with her unclean lusts after the World, where though the Soul for a time suffereth Shipwrack of Worldly Felicity, yet the Lyon of the Tribe of *Juda* is of power, not onely to comfort her in necessity, and to make her to repossess her former estate in the world to come.

The

The 23. History.

A Mighty Emperor sometime ruled the Romans, named Archelaus, who in his old age espoused a fair Lady, whom a young Knight loved, and had to do with her as oft as him list. It befel on a night, that this Emperor bethought him in his Bed, to visit the City of Jerusalem, where without any more delay he ordained all things necessary for his journey, and taking his leave of the Empress, and of the States of the Empire, went towards the said City.

When the Empress heard this, she took the Master of the Ship aside, and said: If thou wilt consent to me, and be true, ask of me what thou wilt, and thou shalt be sure to have it. The Mr. of the Ship was corrupt with Covetousness, and said: O my dear Lady, whatsoever thou command me, I will without fail fulfil it, so that thou wilt reward me for my labour. Then said the Empress, before thou dost ought for me, I will give thee what-ever thou desirest, that thou wilt swear to be true to me, and keep my counsel. Then the Master of the Ship sware to be true to her.

Then said the Empress: My Lord goeth with you in your ship, therefore when he is in the midst of the sea, cast him overboard, that he may be drowned, and thou shalt have what

thou

thou wilt for thy reward. Then the Master of the Ship swore a great Oath, and said, By the great God Jupiter, after he comes once within my Ship, you shall never see him more. Then the Lady gave him as much Gold as he would have, and he went to his Ship.

And within short time after the Emperour took shiping, and when it was in the midst of the Sea, the Master of the Ship took the Emperor and threw him overboard into the Sea. When the Master returned again, he told the Empress how he cast the Emperour into the Sea, whereof she was right glad.

This Emperor that was cast into the Sea had learned in his youth to swim, and swam to an Island in the Sea, & when he was faint and like to be drowned, he prayed to God to be his Help. At length he came into a little Island, wherein was nothing but Lyons and Leopards, and such other beasts as swam thither from other Lands. When the Emperor had got to Land in that Isle, he espied a young Lyon fighting with an old Leopard and the Lyon was too weak, and was almost overcome. Now the Emperor had great compassion on the Lyon, & drew out his sword and forthwith slew the Leopard. The Lyon from that time forth followed the Emperor and would not leave him for any thing, but

ever

very day the prey that the Lyon took, he brought and laid at the Emperors feet, & the Emperor smote fire with a flint stone, & broiled the body of the beasts in the skin: & thus was he fed by a long season. At length, as he walked by the Sea-shore, he saw a goodly Ship come sailing by, with a high voice he cryed. And when the Ship-men heard the voice, they wondred what it might be, wherefore they sailed toward him: and when they were come near him, he said: Good friends take me with you, and I shall pay you a good fraught. So they took him into their Ship, and the Lyon followed him, swiming in the sea after the ship: and when the Lyon was near drowned, the Ship-men had pity on him, and took him into the Ship. Now when the Emperor came to Land, he payed to his fraught, and went forth with the Lyon till he came nær his own Palace where he heard Trumpets, and all other Musick, and he marvel'd what it might be, there came from the Palace a Squire toward him, that knew him, but the Squire knew not him: To whom the Emperor said thus: Good friend, I pray thee tell me what is the cause of this Melody? The Squire answered and said, The Empress is married this day and all the States of the Empire are at the Feast, and therefore they make such Melody. Then said

said the Emperor to the Squire: where
her Husband that was the Emperor before
The Squire said, that he went to the Ho
Land, and was drowned by the way. Th
the Emperor said: Sir, I pray you tell t
Empress and the Lord that shall be her hu
band, that (I to please them) will shew th
Majesties rare sport with my Lyon. T
Squire granted to do his errand, and wa
in and told his Lord and Lady, that a good
old man was at the Gate, that would sh
them sport with his Lyon, Then said t
new married Lady, bring him in, he pe
chance may deserve meat for's play. Wh
the Emperor with his Lyon was brou
in, the Lyon without any setting on, r
upon the young Knight that was newly m
ryed, and slew him, and when he had
done, he ran upon the Empress also, and
boured her to the bones, before all the Lo
of the Empire. And when the Nobles s
this, they were greatly aghast, and bega
flee. But the Emperor with his fair sp
perswaded them, and said: Lo, this is
Vengeance of God, for this my Wife, h
used Adultery long time with this Kni
that lyeth dead, and she practised my de
with the Master of the Ship, and therem
he threw me into the Sea, but God saved
from death; and because I helpt once

Lyon at a need, he never forsook me since, and now, as ye all see, when I came into the Palace, without provoking of me he hath slain both the Adulterers, and therefore understand ye for truth, that I am your Emperor. Now when they heard this, they looked more seriously upon him, and discerned him to be their Emperor, and greatly rejoycing, praised God for that miracle, which had saved their Lord and Emperor. And they lived together a long time in Peace.

The Moral.

Dear Friends, by this Emperor we may understand every Christian man that purposeth to visit the City of Jerusalem, that is, to get everlasting life, through Faith. But his wife, that is, the wretched flesh, murmureth against the soul, and loveth better an adulterer, that is deadly sin, than her Husband. This Emperor went into a Ship, taking his journey towards the City of Jerusalem, that is, he went to the Church of God, which is the way to God: but the Wife, that is, fleshly men, accused him to the Master of the Ship, that is, to the Prelates of the Church, for great Reward which oftentimes do blind the sight of many Justices, whereby many perfect men be cast out of the ship into the sea, to be drowned, that is, out of the Church into the sea of this world. But what shal we do then

at this, thus to be troubled in this world, certainly, this ought he to do: let him learn to swim, that is, let him put all his hope in God, and by his Grace he shall come to an Island, that is the Religion of heart, and then he shal love ever the beter to kæp himself out of this World, and therefore St. James saith, A pure Religion and undefiled before God even the Father is this, &c. And he that is in this Religion shall find a Lion, whom he behoveth to have against the Devil. This Lyon is our Lord Jesus Christ that came of the Tribe of Juda, who fighted ever against the Devil and if a man hath help this Lyon, that is, hath served God against his enemies at any time, he may trust wel, that he wil not forsake him at his næd, according to the Psalmist, saying: I am with him in trouble. By this Lyon thou must tame thy wife that is thy flesh, with Repentance, and slay thy sin, and then without doubt thou shalt obtain the Empire of Heaven. Unto the which bring us all our Lord Jesus. Amen.

The Argument.

The Soul of man espoused to Christ in Baptism, yet dyeth by means of sin, leaving behinde, her Son, called Reason, or rather the Word of God, which seareheth the disease of man, her sinful Father? and being sent for to cure the Malady of his step-mothers will, he refuseth to administer ghostly comfort unto her.

The 24. History.

Sometime there dwelt in Rome a Noble Emperor, named Gregory, who married a vertuous and beautiful Lady to his Wife. This young Lady in due processe of time, conceived, and bare a Son, a fair and an amiable Childe. When this Childe was ten dayes old, his Mother the Empress dyed: not long after, the Emperor married another Wife: The second Wife could not affect or love by any means the Emperors Son, but did him all the shame and reproach that she might? When the Emperor perceived this, willing to please his wife, he exiled his Son out of his Empire. And when the Son was exiled, he went and studied Physick, so that within a short time he was a skilful & cunning Physitian. It befel not long after, that the Emperor his Father sickned, and was almost at deaths dore, wherefore when he heard that his Son was so good a Physitian, he sent for him by Letters, praying him that he would come to him without delay. Now the Son willing to obey his Fathers commandment, in all haste came to him, and when he had felt his pulses, he discerned the sickness, and ministred physick to him, whereby he shortly recovered.

Not long after, the Empresse his stepmother began to fall sick, and many Physiti-

ans said she would dye. And when the Emperor heard this, he sent to his Son to help her of her sickness. Then said his Son, certainly Father, I will lay no hand on her. Then the Emperor began to wax wroth, and said If thou wilt not obey my Commandement, thou shalt henceforth depart my Empire. His Son answered and said: If thou do so (dear Father (you do unrightly, for well you know that you exiled me of your Empire through her suggestion, and my absence was the cause of your sickness, now my presence is cause of her sickness, and therefore I will not meddle with her, nor use any physick unto her, for oftentimes Physitians are deceived in their Patients therefore I dare lay no hand on her, for if it should fortune her to dye, men would judge that my Physick were the cause thereof. Then said the Emperor: she hath the very same sickness that I had. His Son answered and said: Though she have the same sickness, nevertheless you are not both of one constitution: for whatsoever I did to you you were therewith content, and when you saw me come within the Place, you rejoyced at my coming, and was greatly pleased with the sight of me that you begat: But when this my step-mother saw me, she was angry and took corne at her heart, and therefore if I should speak to her, her sorrow would mu

mo

more encrease, and if I should offer to touch her, she would be in rage. Also a Physitian profiteth little except the patient take pleasure in him: Now none can cure her of envy. And when he had spoken his minde, he took his leave and departed thence.

The Moral.

Dear friends this Emperor betokeneth every Christian man, which is married to Christ in the Baptism of regeneration, for then the Soul is made the spouse of Christ, on whom our Saviour begetteth a Son, that is, the knowledge of his Word and Will. But when the child grew up to some ten years of age, or some increase in vertue, his mother Christianity died: then virtue departed from youth, and afterwards the Christian man his father matcheth himself with another woman, the step-mother of the said youth, named ignorant Envy, which in no wise could affect ẏ Emperors Son of knowledg, wherefore shee caused him to be banished into a strange Country, from his Father and her both. It hapned that the good Christian man, being over ruled by his Wife, falleth sick, and sendeth for his Son, that is, knowledge of Gods Word and Will, to cure him as his Physitian, who dutifully performeth the same. But his step-mother falling sick at the sight of the Emperors Son, though the

Christian man her Husband labours to him to cure her, as a good Physitian of her Soul, yet she not liking his good endeavour to win her from her ignorant envy of the Truth, is very hardly healed of her sickness, but often times dyeth in her ignorant envy and wilful wickedness without any hope of health or life unto eternal salvation, so that Physitian comes hither too late.

The Argument.

Jesus Christ the Son of God ought to be cherished and fostered in our hearts by faith and good life: which is taken from us when wee are not thankful unto him for his graces. wherefore the preachers of Gods Word, as good physitians, are sent unto us, for to admonish and warn us to persevere in amendment of life, and constant hope in Christs merits, and so to harbour him in our hearts, he may thereby bestow on us the promotion of heavenly bliss.

The 25. History.

SOmetimes there dwelt in Rome a mighty Emperor named Folenus, who took to wife the kings Daughter of Germany, a fair Lady and courteous, which within short time conceived and bare a Son. When the Childe was born, the States of the Empire came to the Emperor and every one besought the Emperor to have the bringing up of his Son. The Emperor answered, and said: to morrow shall be a Turney, and there

there you shall be, and which of you doth best, and obtaineth the victory, he shall have the keeping of my Son: and if he train him up well, I shall promote him to great dignity and honour, and if he do the contrary he shall dye the foulest death that can be thought. Then said they: Most reverend Lord, all this pleaseth us well. On the morrow, when every man was come to the Tourney, the States justed valiantly: but at length came a valiant Knight named Josias, who so couragiously bare himself there, that he obtained the victory: and immediately after the Tourney was all done, this Josias took the Child and led him home with him. And because the Emperors Son should be received with state in his Country, he sent before to his Castle, and commanded his Officers, that they should royally provide for him, and that the Childs Loging should be in the midst of the Castle, and also that the seven Sciences should be portrayd about the Childes bed, that when the Childe waketh out of his sleep, he might lie in his bed and behold the same. The Knight had a wholsome Well by the Childes bed side, wherein he used to bathe himself, and the Knights wife bear the key of the Well, and there was a Window whereat the Sun might comfortably shine upon him. It fortuned upon a day, that the Lady left

open the Window through negligence, which being done, thither came a Bear, and seing the Window open, went to the Well and bathed him therein, of whose bathing the Well savoured after, through the great heat which was at that time in the hunted Bear, whereby whosoever drank of ỳ water, waxed lepreus within short time after. So it fortuned that the Lord and the Lady with all the house hold, by drinking of the water of that Well became Lepers, not withstanding it appeared not presently. Not long after it fortuned there came a great Eagle in at the Window where the Emperors Son lay, and bare the Child away out of the Cradle. Now when the Lord of the Castle heard this, he wept bitterly, and said: alas, alas, woe is me wretched creature that ever I was born, what shall I do? now I am the Son of Death, for I am become a loathsome Leper, and so is my Wife with all my Houshold, also the Emperors Son is lost and gone.

Now while he thus mourned, there came to him a Physitian, and said: Sir if you will do after my counsel, you shall not repent you; First it behoveth you, your wife, and all your Houshold to be let blood, and after that to be bathed and clean washed, and then I will apply to you my medicine: and when you are whole then shall you and your Houshold walk

up to the mountains, and seek the Emperors Son, for the Eagle hath let it fall there in some place. Then ỳ Lord followed the advice and counsel thus given them by the Physitian, and forthwith he and all his houshould were let blood, and received the medicine, and within a short time after were all whole and sound. When they were thus healed, he took his Horse, accompanied with three men, and rode forth to see the childe, & at last he found him whole and sound lying in a valey, where he greatly rejoyced. And incontinently with great joy and gladnesse he led the childe home to the Emperor his Father. Now when the Emperor saw his Son in good health, he was right glad, and promoted him to great honour. And so after that he had long time lived there in noble state, he after ended his life in peace and rest.

The Moral.

Dear Friends, this Emperor betokeneth the father of Heaven, his Son betokeneth our Lord Jesus Christ, to nourish whom many men desire, at such time as they received the Sacrament of his death & passion. He nourisheth him best that justeth with the Divil & overcometh him by godly life. This Knight that took his Childe with him betokeneth a good Christian man, that evermore abstaineth, fly from doing evil, and laboureth continu-

ally

ally to do good to all men. Therefore do
as the Knight did, send messengers before
prepare and make clean the Castle of our
hearts, from all spots of sin, by lively Faith
and so shall this Child Jesus rest in the mid
of our hearts.

The Well betokeneth Mercy which ough
to be next our Lord, for whosoever is witho
mercy and truth may not nourish the bless
Childe Jesus; but it happened oft, that th
Knights wife, that is the flesh of man, bear
eth, the key of Mercy, and oft leaveth th
Well open, and then comes the Bear, that i
the Devil, and leaveth his loathsome filt
in the Well of mercy, and whosoever tastet
thereof, shall be infected with the Leprosie o
sin. The window, wherein the Son shined i
the grace of the Holy Ghost, by whom me
are comforted Ghostly. By this window th
Eagle cometh in, that is the flying affections
of the wicked World, carrying away th
knowledge of God from us unto the vale o
ignorance and security, and thou man hath
great cause to weep, but what shal we do when
the Child is gone, but send for a skilful Phy-
sitian, that is a discreet Minister of the Word
of God, which shall give him counsel to let
him blood, and all his Houshold, that is to put
out sin through acknowledging thereof, and
reconciling himself with earnest repentance
unto his Heavenly Fathtr. Then

Then must he bathe himself with tares of contrition and compunction of heart, & after that, take the Medicine of amendment of life, and so live pure and clean from all manner of sin, and when he had done thus he must leap on the Palfrey of good perseverance from evil, and ride forth with the three men, that is, shalling from evil, praying to God, and well deserving towards men, and then without doubt he shall find the Child Jesus in the valley of Humility, not on a Hill, that is Pride. And if he do this, doubtlesse he shall have might and power to nourish that blessed Child Jesus, for whose nourishing the Father of Heaven shall promote him unto everlasting joy. Unto the which joy he bring us, that shed his precious blood for us. Amen.

The Argument.

Christ the giver of everlasting Glory hath proclaimed a like joy and blisse in Heaven, as well to the poor as to the rich. But the rich oftentimes coveting all, loseth the prerogative which the poor in heart enjoy by the providence of God? yet as he is a righteous God, he ordaineth both for the rich and poor in such sort, that they will they may together joyfully be satisfied with the great plenty of his abundant graces.

The 26. History.

SOmtime there dwelt in Rome a mighty Emperor, named Fulgentius, which governed his people noble, and loved them so much,

much, that he made a proclamation throughout all Nations: that whosoever would come to him, rich or poor, at a certain day, should have their Petition, whatsoever it were. When the mighty men heard this, they were glad, and came at the day assigned, and every man put forth his petitions to the Emperor, immediately their petitions were granted & fulfilled, in so much that a great part of the Revenues of the Empire was distributed among them. Then every man was joyful, and went home again, and took possession of such Lands and Castels as the Emperor had given them.

Straightway after, the poor men in the Emperors Dominions, gathered them together, and said, a common cry was made that whosoever came to the Emperors Palace, should have what he asked. The rich men have been there lately, and obtained their petitions: therefore go we now, and try if we may obtain any good of the Emperor. Now this Counsel liked them all, wherefore they went to the Emperors Palace, and there they put forth their petitions according to the Proclamation.

When the Emperor had heard them, he said to them: Dear friends, I have heard all your petitions: and it is true that my proclamation was, that every man indifferently

should

should come and have their petitions, but the rich have bẽn here before you, to whom I haue given all that I had, save onely the royalty of my Lordship, and so have nothing left to give you. Whereto the poor men sadly replied Most gracious Soveraign, have compassion on us, & let us not go away empty, for we know wel it is our own default, that we came not rather with those other rich and mighty men; but sith it is so we crave your grace, that we may obtain some what by the which we may live. Then said the Emperor: Good friends, though I have given most of my Lands, Rents, Tenements and Castles, to the rich men that came before you, nevertheless, I have kept still in my own hands the Soveraignty and Dominion over them, and that I do give to you, and so they shall bẽ your servants, and be obedient to you all. And when the poor men heard this, they greatly rejoyced thereat, and knéeled down to the Emperor and thankt him, saying: Lo though we be come late, yet we be Lords over al those other. And with this they took their leave, and went home again. but when the rich and mighty men heard that, they were greatly moved; and ordained a common Parliment among themselves, and thus it was spoken among them: Alas, alas, how many we serve them ỳ sometime were but peasants, and our

subjects

subjects in all manner of things? and not they be made Lords over us. Therefore g we all with one assent to the Emperor, & pra him for redresse. When this was said, the forth with went to the Emperor, and said t him: Reverend Lord, what may this mean Those that were our servants even while, b now our Lords: We beseech your Highnes that it may not be so.

Then said the Emperor: My good friends I do you no wrong, for my Proclamation wa common, ỳ whatsoever you asked of me yo should have your petition, & you asked only o me Lands and Honours, and all those I hav granted you to your own desires, insomuc that I kept nothing for my self, and you wer well content at your going hence. Now af- ter that came the simple and poor men, an asked of me some boon according to my Pro- clamation, and I had nothing to give them but only the soveraignty and dominion over you, which I kept in my hands: and when the poor men cryed so to me, I gave them the authority over you, yet I see not that you can blame me therefore: for I gave you all the wealth which I had. Then said they: O dear and gracious Lord, we pray you let us have your help & advise in that so dangerous a case.

The Emperor answered, and said: Sirs if you will follow my advise, I shall give y good and profitable Counsel, Then

Then they said: we be ready to fulfill whatsoever you advise us for our profit.

Then said the Emperor: My loving friends, you have received of me both Lands and Tenements, and also great plenty of honours & preferments; the which by my counsel you shall impart to the poor men, that they may grant unto you the Soveraignty and that dominion which they have. When the mighty men heard this, they willingly condescended to impart their goods among the poor men, and they as willingly gave them again the Authority over them, like as they had of the rich men. And thus were they both contented and the Emperor was greatly commended of the people, because he so well contented both parties

The Moral.

Dear friends, by this Emperor is understood our Lord Jesus Christ, which made a Proclamation by his Prophets, Patriarks, Apostles and Preachers, that every man both poor and rich, should come and ask everlasting joy, and without doubt they shal obtain their petitions but the rich and mighty men ask for no other thing but worldly honour, & transitory riches, that this world shall passe, and all the covetousnesse thereof: wherefore he gave them so much of worldly wealth, that he had nothing himself, according to the Scriptures: The

Birds

Birds of heaven have nests,& the Foxes of t
earth have caves, But the Son of man hath n
thing in the earth where he may put his head
Mat. 8. 20. The poor men be the mark in hea
of whom the Lord speaketh, saying: Bles
be the poor in spirit, for theirs is the king
dom of Heaven, Mat. 5. 20. So it shall se
that they have soveraignty in Heaven abo
the mighty men of the world, therefore the
rich men ought to impart of their temppo
riches to the poor men according to t
Scripture: Make you friends, with riches
iniquity, that when ye shall want, they m
receive you into everlasting habitation, Lu
16. 9. And according to Tob. 4. 9. Give A
of thy substance: if thou hast but a little,
not afraid to give a little, Alms. And thus
may attain unto the kingdome of Heave
Unto the which I beseech Almighty G
bring us all.

The Argument.

The Emperor of Glory Christ Jesus, hath two daug
ters, the one fair, the other foul, the fair daughter
the world, and the pleasures thereof, and foul is p
verty and trouble: The fair daughter is desired of m
ny, the foul of few, for he that loveth the world
gardeth only the vanities thereof, but he that lov
God will suffer all persecuted and trouble for the
taining of him.

The 27. History.

IN Rome sometime dwelt a noble Emp
ror, named Domitian: which had two dau
te

ters, the one of them was passing fair, but the other foul and ill favoured: Wherefore he proclaimed throughout all his Empire, that whoso would take his fair Daughter to wife, should have no other thing with her, but her beautiful and comely personage; but whoso would marry his foul Daughter, should have all his Empire after his decease. Now when this Proclamation was made, there came many Lords that desired to marry his fair Daughter: to whom the Emperor answered thus. Sirs, ye wot not what ye desire; for, if ye marry her, ye shall have nothing with her, but her beautiful and comely Personage: and furthermore, if I give her to one of you, rather than to another, you will grudge; therefore, if ye will nèds have her, and forsake my foul Daughter, you shall just for her, and he that winneth her, shall marry her.

Then the Nobles and States of the Empire greatly rejoyced; and for the love of that beautiful Damsel they would not only Just, but fight also. So they set a day of Battel, & many worthy men were slain on both sides; nevertheless, one obtained the Victory, and espoused that fair Lady.

The second Daughter, which was foul, & ill-favoured, seeing her sister so bestowed with great solemnity, wept daily: therefore the Emperor her father came to her, & said, dear

Daughter, Why mourneſt thou thus? Alas dear father, quoth ſhe, it is no wonder though I mourn, ſeeing my Siſter is married with great honour and gladneſs, and every man is joyful of her, and no man careth for my company, therefore dear Father, what I ſhall I know not. Then ſaid the Emperor: O my dear Daughter, all that is mine, is thine, and it is not unknown to thee, that he which marryed thy ſiſter, had nothing with her, but her beautiful corps: & therefore I ſhall proclaim in my own perſon, through mine Empire, that what man will marry thee, I ſhall aſſure him the Empire after my deceaſe, by Letters pattent. Then this young Lady, though ſhe was foul and ill-favoured, nevertheleſs ſhe rejoyced greatly i'th promiſe of her father. Shortly after the Proclamation was thus made, there came a proper & young Kt. which eſpouſed the Lady, and after the death of the Emperor, he ſeized upon all the Empire, and he was crowned Emperor, and ſhe Empreſs; and after that, they lived together a long time in peace and reſt.

The Moral.

Dear friends, this Emperor betokeneth our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, which had 2 Daughters, the one fair, and the other foul: The fair Daughter betokeneth the world, which is full fair, and delectable to many men. The

foul

foul betokeneth poverty and trouble, whom few men desire to marry with. Nevertheles, a Proclamation was made by the holy scripture, that whoso would have his fair Daughter, that is, the World, should have nothing with her but her fairnes, that is, the wordly vanities, which fade and fall away, like as the beauty of man: but whoso will Marry the foul Daughter, that is, will voluntarily receive poverty and trouble for Gods love, without doubt he shall obtain the Empire of heaven, according to the Stripture, saying: Ye that have forsaken all things for my love, to follow me, shall have everlasting Life.

Many Noble and worthy men have Sued for the fair Daughter, that is, have sought and travelled by Sea and by Land, in this World, for covetousnes of wordly riches, and at length there be many slain: for there is nothing here, but pride of Life, Covetousnes of the eyes, & of the flesh, where through these grievous sins, all the World is put to great damage and mischief: So he that marryed the fair Daughter, that is the world, is he that setteth all his affections and whole desire upon the wretchednes & vanities of this wicked world, & will not by any means forsake this vain world, like a wretch. But he that marryes the Daughter, that is the good Christian man, which for the love of the

dom of Heaven, & the everlasting joys thereof, forsaketh all this world; and not only doth thus, but also despiseth himself, obeying the true and everlasting God in all things; Such a man certainly shall obtain the joyful and happy Empire of Heaven. Unto the which bring us our Lord Jesus. Amen.

The Argument.

Devotion, Prayer, and Thanksgiving unto God for his Gifts, is a sweet sounding Musick, delectable in the ears of God: We are hereby warned; after our first offending, not to return to our vomit with the Dog; nor after washing, with the Sow, to wallow in the mire: No, rather let us bathe our selves in sorrowful and hearty repentance, in perseverance in good life, that we may live with Christ in everlasting joy and bliss.

The 28. History.

IN Rome sometime dwelt a mighty Emperor Named Adromicha, the which above all things loved Musick. This Emperor had within his Palace a Well of such vertue, that whosoever were drunk, by drinking the water thereof, should incontinently become fresh again, and be deliver'd from all kind of dizziness. There was also dwelling in the Emperors Court a Knight, named Ydrony, whom the Emperor loved much, but oft times he would be drunk, which Vice the Emperor hated above all things. And when this Knight perceived himself drunk, then

then would he go to the Well, and drink of that water, and refresh himself, so that whatsoever the Emperor said to him he would answer him so reasonably, that no drunkenness might be seen in him, and for his witty answers he was greatly beloved of the Emperor. Nevertheless his fellows sought to draw the Emperors love from him.

It fortuned on a day, that this Emperor went to the Forrest, where he heard a Nightingale sing right pleasantly: oftentimes after, he would rise early in the morning, and sometime from his meat, and walk into the Wood to hear her swæt song, wherefore many of his men said among themselves: our Lord delighteth so much in the Nightingals song, that he reckoneth nothing our profit, insomuch that through two things his love is withdrawn from us, that is, Ydrony the Knight, and by the swæt Song of the Nightingale. Then said an old Knight that was among them: Sirs, quoth he, if ye will follow my counsel, I shall deliver you of the Knight Ydrony, and also the Nightingale, without hurt or death. Then they answered, and said: whatsoever you advise us to do, we shall straightway fulfill with all our hearts. When this Kt. heard this, within a while after he chanced to espy this Knight Ydrony drunk, wherefore he locked fast the Well, so

dom of Heaven, & the everlaſting joys thereof, forſaketh all this world; and not only doth thus, but alſo deſpiſeth himſelf, obeying the true and everlaſting God in all things; Such a man certainly ſhall obtain the joyful and happy Empire of Heaven. Unto the which bring us our Lord Jeſus. Amen.

The Argument.

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The 28. Hiſtory.

IN Rome ſometime dwelt a mighty Emperor Named Adromicha, the which above all things loved Muſick. This Emperor had within his Palace a Well of ſuch vertue, that whoſoever were drunk, by drinking the water thereof, ſhould incontinently become freſh again, and be deliver'd from all kind of dizzineſs. There was alſo dwelling in the Emperors Court a Knight, named Ydrony, whom the Emperor loved much, but oft times he would be drunk, which Vice the Emperor hated above all things. And when this Knight perceived himſelf drunk

then

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when this Knight Ydrony came to refresh himself he found the Well fast locked.

Now the Emperor had a great business to treat of, wherefore in haste he sent for this Knight because of his great wisdom, to have his Counsel. And when he came before the Emperor, he was so drunk that he could not move his tongue, neither had wit, nor reason, nor understanding to answer the Emperor to his matter.

But when the Emperor saw this, he was greatly vexed, for as much as he hated that vice: Wherefore he commanded anon, that from that day forward he should be seen no more within his Land upon pain of Death.

This hearing, his foes they rejoyced, and said unto the old Knight: now we be delivered of this Knight Ydrony, there is no more to do, but that we may find a way to be delivered also of the Nightingale, in which the Emperor delighteth so much.

Then said the old Knight, Your ears shall hear, and your eyes shall see the Nightingale shall be destroyed shortly.

Not long after, this old Knight espied that the Nightingale used to sit upon a tree even above the aforesaid Well, whereas her mate came and coupled with her, nevertheless in the absence of her Mate, she took oftentimes another

another mate and coupled with him: When she had thus done, then would she descend to the Well to bathe her self, that when her mate came, he should feel no ill savor or scent of that she had done. When the Knight had seen this, on a time he locked the Well, and when the Nightingale would have descended to bathe her self, after coupling with the other Mate, she found the Well closed: wherefore she flew up into the Tree again, and mourn'd sore in her manner, & left her song. Then came her Mate and saw that she had done against her Nature, he returned again, and in short time brought a great multitude of Nightingals, which slew his Mate, and tare her all in pieces.

The Moral.

Dear friends this Emperor betokeneth our Lord Jesus Christ, which loveth greatly the Song of Devotion, for when we pray we speak unto God, and when we read God speaketh unto us. The Well that was in the Palace betokeneth acknowledging our sins to God. Therefore if any be drunk with sin, let him drink of the Well of acknowledging of his sins and without doubt he shall be safe. This Ydrony betokeneth every man that wilfully returneth again to sin after his acknowledging sin, like as the Dog, that maketh a vomit, and casteth up the meat that he

hath eaten before, and afterward, when he is hungry, cometh and eateth it again. Nevertheless if a man that hath thus sinned, will drink of the Well of acknowledging his sin, he shall receive his ghostly strength.

The Nightingale that sate on the tree, betokens the soul that sitteth on the tree of Holy Doctrine. And her Song betokeneth the Soul that sitteth on the tree of devout Prayers of God. But this Soul doth commit evil as oft as she consenteth to sin. Nevertheless, if she run to the Well of acknowledging of sin, and bathe her with the Water of contrition, God shall shall love her.

But her Foes, that is the Fiends of Hell, seeing this, that God is merciful, they stop the Well of acknowledgment of sin, that is, they would with-draw us from dutiful acknowledgment, and from due reconciliation of our selves betwæn us and God, & betwæn us and man, without shame & dread of repentance, and not declare our sins. And thus, through the temptation of the Devil our adversary, many have bæn exiled, and put to death everlastingly. And therefore study we to bathe our souls in this life in the Well of acknowledgment of sin, with the Water of Contrition, and then we shall be sure in the world to come to have joy everlastingly. Unto the which God bring us all. Amen.

The

The Argument.

The Soul of every good Christian man ought to prepare Armed Vertues for to withstand the assaults of the Devil. We are here put in mind of our deliverance from death, by the precious blood-shed of Jesus Christ: which is a terror to all the Devils in Hell, if we continue in Faith, and believe in him, the bulwark of our Salvation.

The 29. History.

SOmtime there dwelt in Rome a mighty Emperor Named Hermes, which had a mighty strong City, exceeding strongly walled about, and a Bell hanging in the midst of the said City; and whensoever the Emperor went to any Battel without the City, this Bell was ever rung; but there did no man ring the Bell, but a Virgin. Within short time after it befel, that Dragons, Serpents, and also many other venemous Beasts, impoysoned much people, so that the City was almost destroyed: Wherefore, the States of the City went with one accord to the Emperor, and said: Lord, what shall we do? Lo, our people, our goods, and our City is almost destroyed, and you and we be in peril to perish, through these cruel Beasts that consume us, therefore take we good counsel, or else we are undone. Then said the Emperor: What think you is best to be done in this matter? and how may we be best defended? Then answered one of the wisest, and said: My

Lord,

Lord, hear my counsel, and do thereafter, and you shall not repent it: You have in your Palace a Lyon, set up a piece of timber for the purpose, & thereunto let the Lyon be nailed and made fast, and when other venemous Beasts see him thus used, they will be afraid, and forsake our City, & we shall be in safety. Then said the Emperor, it pleaseth me well that he be so used, thereby to save you. Then they took the Lyon and used him in like manner as aforesaid, which when the other beasts saw, flew away for fear, and never more afterwards durst they come thither.

The Moral.

Dear friends, this Emperor betokeneth the father of Heaven, the City well walled, with a Bell in the midst, betokeneth the soul walled about with Vertues. The Bell betokeneth a clean Conscience that warneth a man to Battel, when he should fight against the Devil, that he might arm himself before with vertues. The Virgin that should always ring this Bell in Reason, which is a Virgin inclineth to all rightfull cleanness. The venemous Dragon that bareth the fire betokneth the flesh of man, wch. bears the fire of covetousness, which burnt Adam our forefather, when he eat of ỳ forbidden apple. The venemous Beasts that poisoned the men betokeneth the fiends of Hell, which for the most

most part have destroyed all mankind. The gates of the City betokeneth the Patriarks and Prophets, which besought God of counsel and remedy, that mankind might be saved, & anon it was counselled for the best remedy, that a Lyon (that is Christ) should be nailed upon the Cross, according to the Scriptures saying thus, It was requisite that one man should dye for the people, lest all flesh should perish.

Then took they Christ & hung him on the Cross, for the which the devil dreadeth Christian people, and dares not come nigh them, and thus by the grace of God, Christian men shall come to everlasting bliss. Unto which bring us the Lamb of God, which shed his precious blood for us. Amen.

The Argument.

Here is signified the thraldome of man unto Satan by sin, till Christ the Son of God descended, with the power of the Holy Ghost, to set him at liberty, and put him in possession of the Palace of everlasting felicity.

The 30. History.

There dwelt sometime in Rome a mighty Emperor and a merciful, named Meney, who ordained such a Law, that what innocent person was taken and put in prison, if he might escape and come to the Emperors Palace, he should be there safe from all manner of accusations against him in his life time. It was not long after, but it befel, that

that a Knight was accuſed, wherefore, he was taken and put in a ſtrong and dark Priſon, where he lay a long time, and had no light but a little Window, whereat ſcant light ſhone in, that lighted him to eat ſuch ſimple meat as the Kæper brought him: Wherefore he mourned greatly, and made ſorrow that he was thus faſt ſhut up from the ſight of men. Nevertheleſs, when the Kæper was gone, there came daily a Nightingale in at the window, & ſung full ſwætly by whoſe ſong this woful Knight was oftentimes ſet with joy, and when the Bird left off ſinging then would ſhe fly into the Knights boſome, and there this Knight fed her many a day, of the victual that God ſent him. It befel after upon a day, that the Knight was greatly deſolate of comfort. Nevertheleſs, the Bird that ſate in his boſome fed upon kernels of Nuts, and thus he ſaid to the Bird: Swæte Bird I have ſuſtained thæ many a day, what wilt thou give me now in my deſolation to comfort me? Remember thy ſelf well, how that thou art the creature of God, and ſo am I alſo, and therefore help me now in this my great næd.

When the Bird heard this, ſhe flew forth from his boſome, and tarried from him three dayes, but the third day ſhe came again, and brought in her mouth a precious Stone, and

d it in the Knights bosome. And when had so done, she took her flight, and flew om him again. The Knight marvelled at Stone, and at the Bird, and forth with took the Stone in his hand, and touched Gives and Fetters therewith, and pre- tly they fell off. And then he arose and ched the doors of the Prison, and they o- ned, and he escaped, and ran fast to the perors Palace. When the Keeper of the ison perceived this, he blew his Horn ce, and raised up all the Folk of the City, them forth, crying with an high voice, the Thief is gone, follow we him all. with that he ran before all his Fellows ards the Knight: And when he came him, the Knight bent his Bow, and an Arrow, wherewith he smote the kee- n the Lungs, and slew him and then ran he palace, where he found succour against Law.

The Moral.

Dear Friends, this Emperor betokeneth Lord Jesus Christ, who ordained a Law, what Innocent, that is, what person prisoned wrongfully, might escape, and e to his Palace in his Heavenly Habita- through Repentance & true amendment ife, should find perpetual succour and

This

This Knight betokeneth every one that
innocent, and accuſed by envy or malice u
juſtly, taking grief for his preſent eſtate.

The Keper of this Priſon, betokeneth t
Devil, that keepeth ſuch a man hard bou
by ſin, and ſerveth him with riches and d
lights of this tranſitory world, that he ſhou
not eſcape from danger.

The bird that ſingeth ſo ſweetly betoken
the voice of Heaven, that ſaith, to the
preſſed: Turn again, now turn again, th
Priſoner, that is, turn again thou oppreſſ
and I will receive thee to Grace, for w
Mankind was in thraldome to Satan
the Priſon of Hell, then came there a Bir
that is, the Godhead, bearing with him
Stone, that betokens our Lord Jeſus Chri
according to the Holy Scripture, ſayin
I am a Stone.

The Soul of Chriſt deſcended with
Godhead, and brought with him all manki
out of the Priſon of Hell, therefore if a
of us be in the Priſon of worldly oppreſſio
touch we our ſins with the Stone, that
with the vertue of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt,
acknowleging our ſin in faithful prayer,
by true contrition, and then without doub
the chains of our oppreſſion, with the Ston
ſhall be broken and fall from us, and
dor of Heavenly Grace ſhall be opened, e
ſh

all obtain help and succour in the Palace the Heavenly Habitation.

And if the keeper of the Prison, that is the devil (which is the blower of the Horn of pride, lechery, or covetousness, stir in us any vice, then turn we towards him manfully, & shoot at him the Arrow of constant Faith in Jesus Christ, by true and unfeigned Repentance, & without doubt he shall fly from us: so then by the grace of God, we may obtain the Palace of Heavenly bliss, where we shall behold the King of all glory. Unto the which bring us our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

The Argument.

A poor man exalted to dignity, is here admonished not to be unthankful, and to render evil for good, but even the most simple ones to be grateful for any benefit, because surely God that gives thee this promotion, will take the brutish creatures of the earth thy enemis, and depose thee from thy dignity; and he that hath helped thee, be he never so base, may in the end have better favour with God and man than thy self, wherefore be warned of ingratitude by this example, and know thy self, thy God, and Friend.

The 31. History.

SOmetime there dwelt in Rome a mighty Emperor, Named Ebolides. It fortuned one day, that this Emperor walked into a great Forrest to take his pleasure, where he met suddenly with a poor man, and so soon as the Emperor saw him, he was greatly moved with

with mercy, and said: God Friend, whe
art thou: My Soveraign Lord, quoth he
am your Subject born in your Land, and
now in great poverty. Then said the E
peror: If I knew that thou wert true in
very thing, I would promote thee to gr
riches, therefore tell me what is thy Nam
My Lord, quoth he, I am called Lentul
I promise you to do you true service, an
I do otherwise, I submit my self to all ma
ner of punishment that you can put me
When the Emperor heard that, he prome
him incontinently to great riches, & sho
after he made him a Knight, & the Stew
of his Land. And when he was thus era
to honor, he waxed very proud, insomuch t
he despised both his superiours & inferiou
Not long after this Steward rode by a gr
Forrest, where he met with the Forrest
and charged him that he should make a h
dred pits in the ground and cover them o
with green grasse and small boughs, that
wild beasts fortuned to go to the Forrest t
way, they might fall in, & so being taken,
brought to the Emperor. The Forrester
swered, & said: Sir, as you have said, it
be done. Not long after it fortuned,
this Steward rode to the Forrest again to
if those pits were made, and as he rode,
bethought himself how wealthy a man,

how mighty in power he was made, and how
most men in the Empire obeyed him, and
were at's command. As he rode thus think-
ing, he said to himself: There is no man
greater than I; and with that he smote his
horse with his spurs, and suddenly he fell in-
to one of the deep pits, that he himself had or-
dained before, for the wilde Beasts, and for
the great deepness thereof he could not rise
again by any manner of means, wherefore he
languished in great perplexity: and straight
way after him came a fierce Lyon, and fell
into the same pit, and after the Lyon an Ape,
and after the Ape a Serpent. When the
Steward was thus beset with these Beasts,
he was exceedingly afraid.

Then at that time was dwelling in the
City, a poor man named Guy, that had no
riches save only an Ass, whereon daily he
carried sticks and wood that fell from trees,
and such as he could get in the Forrest, and
those he brought to the Market and sold
them: and in this wise sustained himself,
and his wife as long as he might.

It fortuned that this poor Guy went to
the Forrest as he was wont, and as he came
by the deep pit, he heard a man cry and say:
O dear friend, what art thou? for Gods sake
help me, and I shall recompence thee so well
that thou shalt ever after be the better: when

this poor Guy heard that it was the voice of a man, he marvelled greatly, and stood still at the Pits brink, and said: Lo, good friend, I am come, why hast thou cal'd me? Then said the Knight, Dear Friend I am Steward of all the Emperors Land, and thus by fortune I am fallen into the pit, and here be with me three Beasts, that is, a Lyon, an Ape, and a horrible Serpent which I fear most of all, and I wot not by which of them I shall be devoured: therefore I pray thee get a long Rope, wherewith thou maist draw me out of this deep pit, and I will make thee rich for ever hereafter: for if I have not help the rather, I shall be devoured of these Wild Beasts.

Then said this poor Guy, I may fail in at this time intend to help thee, for I have nothing to live on, but that I gather wood, and carry it to the Market to sell, wherewith I am sustained. Nevertheless, I will leave my purposed labour, and fulfill thy will, and if thou reward me not, it will be a great hinderance to me, and to my poor Wife. Then the Steward made a great Oath, & said: I will promote thee & thine to great Wealth. Then said Guy, if you will perform your promise, I shall do what you command me. And with that he went again to the City, and bought there a long Rope, and came to the

pit again, and said: Sir Steward, loe here I let down a Rope to thee, bind thy self about the middle therewith, that I may pull thee up. Then was the Steward glad, and said: Good friend let down the Rope: & with that he cast the end of the Rope down into the pit; And when the Lyon saw it, he caught the rope and held fast, and Guy drew up the Lyon, weening in himself he had drawn up the Steward, and when he had so done, the Lyon thanked in his manner, and ran to the Wood. The second time that Guy let down the Rope the Ape leapt to it, and caught it fast, & when he was drawn up, he thanked Guy in his manner, and ran to the Wood. The third time he let down the Rope, he drew up the Serpent, which thanked him and went to the wood. Then the Steward cryed with a loud voice: O dear friend, now I am delivered of these three ravenous Beasts, let down the Rope to me, that I may come up. Then this poor Guy let down the Rope and the Steward bound himself fast about the middle, and Guy drew him up. And when he was thus helpt out of the pit, he said to Guy as followeth:

Come to me to morrow to the Palace, and then I will reward thee. Then poor Guy rejoyced thereat, and went home without Reward. Then his Wife demanded of him why he gather'd no wood whereby they might

lyes that day. Then told he her of the event as it befel, how the Steward fell into the pit (and also the Lyon, the Lye and the Serpent) that he had made in the Forrest, & how he had holpen him out with a Rope, and saved him from being devoured of the three venomous Beasts; and that he should go to the Steward, and fetch his Reward on the morrow. When's wife heard this, she rejoyced greatly, and said: If it shall be so, pray you rise to morrow at a due hour and go to the Palace, and receive your Reward, that we may be comforted thereby.

So in the morning Guy arose, and went to the Palace and knocked at the Gate: then came the Porter, and asked the cause of his knocking? I pray thee quoth this Guy, go to the Steward & say to him: That here abideth a poor man at the Gate, that spake with him yesterday in the Forrest. The Porter went & told the Steward as the poor man had said; Then said the Steward: Go you again, and tell him, that he lyeth, for yesterday spake I with no man in the Forrest, and charge him that he go away & trouble me no more. The Porter went forth, & told poor Guy what the Steward had said, and charged him to go away. Then was this poor Guy sorrowful, and went home, and he told his wife how the Steward answered him. His Wife comfor-

ted

led him in all the might, and said: Go you again and prove him there.

Then on the morrow this Guy arose, and went to the Palace again, praying the Porter to do his errand once again to the Steward. The Porter answered and said: Gladly would I do thy errand, but I fear me it will be to thy hurt. Then went he in and told the Steward, That this poor man was again returned, when the Steward heard that, he went out, and all to beat poor Guy, and left him in peril of death.

When his Wife heard this, she came with her Alle, and led him home as she might, and all that she had she spent upon Surgeons, and Physitians to help him: and when he was perfectly whole, he went to the Forrow as he was wont, for to gather sticks and small wood for his living. And as he went in the Forrest he saw a Lyon driving before him ten Alles that were laden with rich Jewels and Merchandise. This Lyon drove forth the Alles before Guy, which feared him sore, lest he should have devoured him, nevertheless when he beheld the Lyon better, he knew well that it was the same Lyon that he drew out of the pit. This Lyon left not Guy till all the Alles with the Merchandise were entred into his yard, and then the Lyon did him obeysance, and ran to the Wood.

Then Guy searched the Fardels, and found great riches therein, wherefore he made proclamation in divers churches, if any man had lost such goods he should have them again, but there was none that challenged them. And when Guy saw this: he sold the goods, and bought therewith house and Land, and so was made rich. Nevertheless he went to the Forrest, as he did before. And as he was in the Forrest gathering wood, he spyed the Ape on the top of a Tree, breaking boughs hastily with her teeth and claws, and throwing them down, so that in short time Guy had loaded his Asse: And when he had so done, she went her way, and Guy went home.

Now Guy on the morrow went to the Forrest again, and as he sate binding his faggots, he saw the Serpent that he drew out of the pit come towards him, bearing in her mouth a precious stone of three colours, which she let fall at Guy's feet, & when she had thus done, she kissed his feet and went her way. Then Guy took up the stone, and marvelled greatly of what vertue it might be, wherefore he rose up, and went to a Jeweller named Peter, and said: Dear Brother, I pray thee tell me the vertue of this precious stone, and I shall reward thee for thy labour. When this Jeweller had well beheld, and understood the nature of the stone, he said: Good friend, if thou list to

sell

sell the Stone, I shall give thee an hundred Marks for it. Then said Guy, I will not sell the Stone, till thou tell me truly the vertues thereof. Then said the Jeweller, without doubt this Stone hath three vertues: the first vertue is, that whosoever beareth this Stone about him, shall have joy without sorrow: the second vertue is, that he shall have plenty without want: the third vertue is, that he shall have light without darkness, and it hath also another vertue, that no man may sell it, but for as much as it is worth, & if he do the contrary, the Stone returneth again to the first owner. When Guy heard this, he was right joyful, and said to himself, in a good hour I drew these beasts out of the pit.

Not long after it befel, that this Guy was made passing rich, and bought great possessions and livings, wherefore within a while he was made a Knight.

It was not long after, but the Emperor had knowledge how Sir Guy had a Stone of such vertue, wherefore he sent for Sir Guy, commanding him to come in all haste, and so he did. And when Sir Guy was come to the Emperor, and he said unto him: my friend, I have heard say that sometimes thou wert in great poverty, & now thou art made rich by the vertue of a little stone, therefore I pray thee that thou sell me that Stone. Sir Guy

answered and said, that may I not do, for as long as I have that stone I am sure of three things, that is of joy without sorrow, plenty without want, and light without darkness. When the Emperor heard this, he had greater desire to buy the Stone than he had before, and said to him: Sir Guy, of two things thou must chuse one that is, whether thou wilt forsake this Empire, and all thy kindred, or else sell me the Stone. Then said Sir Guy: My Lord if it must needs be thus be it at your will. Nevertheless I shall tell you the property of this stone, if you pay not for it as it is worth, without doubt it will come to me again. Then the Emperor said surely I will give sufficient, for thou shalt receive of me therefore a thousand pound, and so it was done. Sir Guy received the money and went home.

On the morrow early he opened his Coffer, and found the Stone, and then he told the Lady his Wife, how he had found in his Coffer the Stone which he had sold to the Emperor. Then said his Wife: Good Sir, haste you unto the Emperor again, and give him the Stone, lest he be displeased, and through malice repute some deceit in us.

Then went Sir Guy again to the Emperor and said to him: My Lord, yesterday I sold you a Stone, which if it please you, I would fain

ain sée. The Emperor went for his Stone
o the Treasury, but found it not, wherefore
e was right sorrowful, and came again, and
old Sir Guy how it was lost; then said Sir
Guy: My Lord, grieve you not, for I told
ou yesterday, that I might not sell it, except
I had the value thereof, and yesterday I re-
eived a thousand pound of you therefore, and
his day I found it in my Coffer again, and
herefore if I had not brought the stone again,
eradventure you would have told me your
eavy countenance, and with that he shewed
rth the Stone, whereat the Emperor mar-
elled greatly, and said, Sir Guy, by the
ith that thou owest to me, tell me how thou
mest by this Stone.

Then said Sir Guy, by the faith that I
we to you, I shall tell you the very truth,
s touching the Stone.

Your Steward that is so promoted up of
ought, caused many déep Pits to be made in
our Forrest, and it fortuned that he not long
ter fell into one of them himself, & through
e déepness thereof could not rise again. It
anced also the same day, that a Lyon, an
pe, & a Serpent fell into the pit with him,
which time I was a very poor man, & took
eat pains for my living, and as I walked
to ye Forrest with mine Ass to gather wood
cryed to me to help him out of the Pit, and

save

save him from death, for there were in the Pit with him three venomous beasts, that is a Lyon, an Ape, and a foul Serpent, and then he promised me by his word, to promote me & all my kindred to great riches: which when I heard, I was right glad, and let down a Rope unto him, supposing to have drawn him up, and haled up a Lyon, and after that an Ape, and after a Serpent, and at the last your Steward.

The Lyon gave me ten Asses laden with Merchandise, ꝑ Ape gave me as much wood as mine Asse would bear, and the Serpent gave me this stone that I have told you, but your Steward beat me, and wounded me sore for my good will, that I was born home upon mine Asse.

When the Emperor heard this, his heart was moved greatly against the Steward wherefore he examin'd him of that false deed, but he was dumb, and would not speak, for so much that he could not deny his ingratitude.

Then said the Emperor: O thou wretched creature, unreasonable Beasts, as the Lyon, the Ape, and the Serpent, rewarded him for his good deed, and thou that art a reasonable man hast almost beaten him to death ꝑ save thee, & took thee out of the pit, therefore for thy falshood & wickedness, I judg thee to be hang

this day on the Gallows, and all thy goods
y lands I grant to Sir Guy, and also I
ain that Sir Guy shall occupy thy place,
o be my Steward: and so it was done.
When Sir Guy was thus rewarded by the
mperor, & made Steward, he was well be-
ed of every man as long as he lived, and at
last ended his life with honour in peace.

The Moral.

This Emperor betokeneth the Father of
aven, the poor man betokeneth every man
t cometh into this world, and at last is
mooted to great riches and worldly honor,
the Psalmist saith: God lifteth up the poor
n out of the mire. But many such men
ther know God nor themselves, but casts
p pits to be made, that is unkindness and
lice, they ordain against simple men, into
which pit the Devil oft casteth them to
l, according to the Text in Ecclesiasticus,
o maketh a pit for another man, himself
eth therein: Which Text was proved by
mon, who caused a Gallows to be set up
Merdocheus, but was hanged thereon him-
.

This Guy that went daily to the Forrest
th his Ass to gather wood, betokens every
e godly man, fearing God in the Forrest
this world: his wood that he gathereth be-
keneth his faith and good works, which he

carrieth

carrieth upon his Asse humane endeavour
whereby his soul may have joy, & live in t
tabernacle of Heaven, and as the Stewar
the Lyon, the Ape and the Serpent fell int
the pit, right so a sinful man falleth into t
pit of sin: But the Lyon of the Tribe of Jud
(that is Jesus Christ) descended with him a
oftentimes as the sinner hath will to come t
grace. Therefore saith the Psalmist, I a
with him in Tribulation.

This Guy, draweth up the Lyon, that
mans soul out of the pit, by the cord of vert
he drew up the Ape also, that is, contra
will to reason, that he may obey to reason
for of all manner of Beasts, the Ape is mo
like to man, like as amongst all the streng
of the soul, discretion ought to be linked w
reason, and to obey reason. He drew up a
a Serpent, by which is to be understood r
pentance, for two causes: for as the Serpe
beareth in his mouth venom, and in his ta
a medicine: right so repentance beareth
the beginning bitterness to the doer, yet it
sweet & medicinable unto the soul at the en
and therefore every just man should draw
him the Serpent of repentance. Then at t
last he drew up the Steward from the pit
sin, according unto Christs saying, I am co
not onely to call the Righteous, but Sinners
Repentance. Also it is written, that Sen

Philologer taught the Emperor many
ws and Vertues of truth, and at last as
Steward did, he sought the death of Sene-
Also Christ gave power to Judas to work
racles, as he did to the other Disciples,
t betrayed him at last: Right so, now a-
ys many children of Belial delight more to
harm than good, especially to them that
uld instruct them perfectly both for Soul
d Body.

The Lyon gave to the just and godly man
n ten Asses laden with Merchandise: that
our Lord Jesus Christ gives unto every
hteous man ten Commandements char-
with Vertues, by which he groweth to
riches of Heaven.

The Ape also gathereth him wood, as oft
he just man worketh the works of faith:
wood necessarily is profitable for two u-
that is, to make a fire, to build houses; e-
so Charity rejoyceth God and Angels in
aven according to Scripture, More joy is
ng Angels for one sinner that repenteth,
Charity also raiseth the house of hea-
against the coming of the Soul.

he Serpent also gave him a stone of three
rs colours, which betokeneth our Lord
us Christ, whom we seek by Repentance.
erefore saith St. Jerome, in his second
le thus: We should repent us after our
wrack.

That

That Christ is the Stone, may be proved by himself, saying: I am a living Stone; Christ hath three colours, which betokeneth the power of the Father, the wisdom of the Son, & the humility of the holy Ghost: Therefore whoso may get this precious stone shall have the Empire of Heaven, joy without sorrow, plenty without want, & light without darkness. Unto the which bring us our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

The Argument.

By the Nativity of Christ proceedeth joyful gladness to the World, and Salvation unto mankind; yet it is unthankful unto God, contrary to his promise made in Baptism. We are warned in all worldly tempests continually to cleave to Christ by Faith and Hope, to continue well doing, and to withstand the malice of the Devil; The Preachers of Gods Word, are sent of God to confound the Devil by sound Doctrine and godly life. Life and Death is set before men: we ought rightly to chuse that life, that may be for our everlasting comfort.

The 32. History.

SOmetime dwelt in Rome a mighty Emperor, named Anselm: who had married the Kings Daughter of Jerusalem, a fair Lady and a gracious in the sight of every man. She was long time with the Emperor, ere she bare him any Child, wherefore the Nobles of the Empire were very sorrowful, because their Lord had no Heir of his own body begot-

Till at last it befel, that this Anselm walked after supper, in an evening, into his Garden, and bethought himself that he had no Heir, and how the King of Ampluy warred on him continually, for so much as he had no Son to make defence in his absence, therefore he was sorrowful, and went to his Chamber & slept. Then he thought he saw a Vision in his sleep, that the morning was more clear than it was wont to be, and that the Moon was much paler on the one side than on the other. And after he saw a Bird of two colours, and by that Bird stood two Beasts, which led that little Bird with their beak. And after that came more Beasts, and bowing their breasts towards the Bird, went their way: Then came there divers Birds that sung sweetly, & pleasantly, with that the Emperor awaked. In the morning early this Anselm remembred his vision, & wondered much what it might signifie, wherefore he called to him his Philosophers, & all the States of the Empire, & told them his dream; charging them to tell him the signification thereof, on pain of death, & if they told him the true interpretation thereof, he promis'd them good reward. Then said they: dear Lord, tell us your dream, & we shall declare to you what it betokens. Then the Emperor told them from the beginning to the ending, as it is afore-

said

laid. When the Philoſophers heard this with glad cheer they anſwered and ſaid: Sir the viſion that you ſaw betokeneth good, for the Empire ſhall be clearer than it is.

The man that is more pale on the one ſide than on the other, betokeneth the Empreſs that hath loſt part of her colour, through the conception of a Son that ſhe hath conceived. The little Bird betokeneth the Son that ſhe ſhall bear. The two beaſts that fed this Bird betokens the wiſe & rich men of the Empire which ſhall obey the Son. Theſe other beaſts that bowed their breaſts to the Bird, betoken many other Nations that ſhall do him homage. The Bird that ſang ſo ſweetly to the little Bird, betokeneth the Romans, who ſhall rejoyce & ſing becauſe of his birth. This is the very interpretation of your Dream.

When the Emperor heard this, he was right joyful. Soon after that the Empreſs travelled in Child-birth, and was delivered of a fair Son; at whoſe birth there was great and wonderful joy made.

When the King of Ampluy heard this, he thought in himſelf thus: Lo, I have warred againſt the Emperor all the days of my life, and now he hath a Son, who when he cometh to full age, will revenge the wrong I have done againſt his Father, therefore it is better that I ſend to the Emperor, and beſeech him to

truce and peace, that the Son may have nothing against me, when he cometh to manhood: When he had thus said to himself, he wrote to the Emperor, desiring him to have peace. When the Emperor saw that the K. of Amplay wrote to him more for fear than for love, he wrote again to him, that if he would find good & sufficient sureties to keep the peace, & bind himself all the dayes of his life to do him service and homage, he would receive him to peace.

When the King had read the tenor of the Emperors Letter, he cal'd his counsel praying them to give him Counsel how he might best do, as touching this matter. Then said they: It is good that ye obey the Emperors will and commandement in all things. For first, in that he desired of you surety for the Peace, to this we answer thus. Ye have but one Daughter, and the Emperor one Son, wherefore, let a marriage be made between them, and that may be a perpetual Covenant of peace. Also he asketh homage and tribute, which it is good to fulfil. Then the K. sent s Messengers to the Emperor, saying; that he would fulfil his desire in all things, if it might please his Highness, that his Son and the Ks. Daughter might be married together. All this well pleased the Emperor, yet he sent again, saying: If his Daughter were

a clean Virgin from her birth unto that day he would consent to that marriage. Then was the King right glad, for his Daughter was a clean Virgin.

Therefore when the Letters of Covenant and compact were sealed, the King furnished a fair Ship, wherein he might send his Daughter, with many Noble Knights, Ladyes, and great Riches unto the Emperor, for to have his Son in marriage.

And when they were sailing in the Sea towards Rome, a storm arose so streamly & so horribly, that the ship brake against a Rock, and they were all drowned, save onely the young Lady, which fired her hope and heart so greatly on God, that she was saved, and about three of the clock the tempest ceased, & the Lady drove forth over the wawes in the broken ship which was cast up again: but a huge Whale followed after, ready to devour both the ship and her. Wherefore this young Lady when night came, smot fire with a stone wherewith the ship was greatly lightened, and then the Whale durst not adventure toward the ship for fear of the light. At the Cock crowing, this young Lady was so weary of the great tempest & trouble of Sea, that she slept, and within a little while after the fire ceased, and the Whale came and devoured the Virgin. And when she awaked and found

her

her self swallowed up in the Whales belly, she smote fire, and with a knife wounded the Whale in many places, & when the Whale felt himself wounded, according to his nature he began to swim to Land.

There was dwelling at that time in a Country near by, a noble Earl named Pirris, who for his recreation walking on the Sea shore, saw the Whale coming towards the Land, wherefore he turned home again, and gathered a great many of men and women, and came thither again, and fought with the Whale, and wounded him very sore, and as they smote, the Maiden that was in his belly cryed with an high voice, and said: O gentle friends, have mercy and compassion on me, for I am a Kings Daughter, and a true Virgin from the hour of my birth unto this day. When the Earl heard this, he wondered greatly, & opened the side of the Whale, and found the young Lady, and took her out. And when she was thus delivered, she told him forthwith whose Daughter she was, and how she had lost all her goods in the Sea, and how she should have been married unto the Emperors Son. And when the Earl heard this, he was very glad, and comforted her the more, and kept her with him till she was well refreshed. And in the mean time he sent Messengers to the Emperor, letting him

to know how the Kings daughter was fared.

Then was the Emperor right glad of her safety and coming, and had great compassion on her, saying: Ay good Maiden. For the love of my son thou hast suffered much woe: nevertheless if thou be worthy to be his wife, soon shall I prove. And when he had thus said he caused three Vessels to be brought forth. The first was made of pure Gold, well beset with precious stones without, & within full of dead mens bones, and thereupon was engraven this Posie: Whoso chuseth me, shall find that he deserveth. The second Vessel was made of fine silver, filled with earthy worms, the Superscription was thus: Whoso chuseth me, shall find that his nature desireth. The third Vessel was made of Lead, full within of precious stones, and thereupon was insculpt this Posie: Whoso chuseth me, shall find that God hath disposed for him. Then these three Vessels the Emperor shewed the Maiden, and said: Lo, here Daughter, there be three Vessel, if thou chuse one of these, wherein is profit to thee and to others, then shalt thou have my Son. And if thou chuse that wherein is no profit to thee nor to any other, surely thou shalt not marry him.

When the Maiden heard this, she lift up her hands to God, and said: Thou Lord that knowest all things, grant me grace this hour

so

to ta chuse, that I may receive the Empe-
rors Son. And with that she beheld the first
vessel of Gold, which was engraven royally,
and read the superscription: Whoso chuseth
me, shall find that he deserveth: saying thus:
though this Vessel be full precious, and
made of pure Gold, nevertheless, I know not
what is within, therefore my dear Lord,
this Vessel will I not chuse.

And then she beheld the second Vessel, that
was of pure silver, and read the superscrip-
tion: Whoso chuseth me, shall find that his
nature desireth: Thinking thus within her
self, if I chuse this Vessel, what is within I
know not, but well I know, there shall I
find that nature desireth, and my nature de-
sireth the lust of the flesh, and therefore this
Vessel will I not chuse.

When she had seen these two Vessels, and
had given an answer as touching them, she
beheld the third Vessel of Lead, and read the
superscription: Whoso chuseth me, shall find
that God hath disposed: Thinking within
her self, this vessel is not very rich, nor out-
wardly precious, yet the superscription saith:
Whoso chuseth me, shall find that God hath
disposed: and without doubt God never dis-
poseth any harm, therefore by the leave of
God this Vessel will I chuse.

When the Emperor heard this, he said: O

fair Maiden upon the vessel, for it is full precious stones, and see if thou hast well chosen or no. And when this young Lady had opened it, she found it full of fine Gold and precious stones, as the Emperor had told her before. Then said the Emperor: Daughter because thou hast wel chosen, thou shalt marry my Son. And then he appointed the wedding day, and they were married with great solemnity, and with much honour continued to their lives end.

The Moral.

This Emperor betokens the Father of Heaven, who was long time without a natural son, therefore many men were in danger of perishing in Hell. The Empress conceived when the Angel Gabriel said: Lo, thou shalt conceive and bear a Child. And then the Firmament began to clear when this little Child lightened the World with his birth. The Moon began to wax pale, when the face of the Virgin Mary was over-shadowed by vertue of the Holy Ghost, and not only her face was thus shadowed, but also her body, for she was conceived with child as another woman, wherefore Joseph would have forsaken her privily and gone away. This little bird that came from the one side of the Moon betokens our Lord Jesus Christ, who at midnight was born of the Virgin Mary, wrapped

in cloaths and laid in an Ore stall. The two Beasts betoken the Ox and the Ass, that Joseph brought with him, which honors him in his birth. These other beasts that came from far, betokeneth the Shepherds in the field, to whom the Angel said thus: Loe, I shew you great joy. The Birds that sung so sweetly, betokens the Angels in Heaven, which sung at his birth this joyful Song: Glory be to God above, and peace to men on Earth.

The King of Ampluy, which help war against the Emperor, betokens all mankind, that were contrary to God, as they were in the Devils power. But immediately, when our Lord Jesus Christ was born, he bowed himself to God, and besought him of peace, when he received his baptism, for at our baptism we promised to obey onely to God, and forsake the Devil and all his pomp. The K. gave his Daughter in marriage to the Emperors Son, right so every one of us ought to give his Soul in marriage to Gods Son, for he is always ready to receive our soul as his Spouse; according to the Scripture, saying thus: I will marry thee to me. But ere our Soul may come to the Palace of Heaven, she must sail by the Sea of the world, in the ship of good life: but oftentimes there ariseth a tempest in the Sea, that is, trouble of this World, the temptations of the flesh, and the

suggestion of the Devil ariseth suddenly, and drowneth the vertues that the Soul received in Baptism; nevertheless yet falleth she not out of the ship of charity, but keepeth her self surely therein by faith and hope. For as the Apostle saith, By hope we be saved. For it is impossible to be saved without hope or faith. The great Whale that followed the Maiden betokens the Devil, which by night and by day, lyeth in wait to overcome the soul by sin: therefore do we as the Maiden did, smite the fire of charity and love out of the stone, that is Christ, according to this saying, I am a stone, and certainly the Devil shall have no power over us: Many men begin well, as did the Maid, but at last they be weary of their good works, and so they sleep in sin: And anon when the Devil perceiveth this, he devoureth the sinner in his evil thoughts, delights, consent and works. Therefore if any of us feel our selves in such wise under the power of the Devil, let him do as the Maid did, smite the Devil with the knife of bitter repentance, then kindle the fire of Charity, and without doubt he shall cast thee on the Land of good life.

The Earl that came with his servants to slay the Whale, betokens a discreet Preacher, dweling beside the Sea, that is, not drawn to worldly delectation, but ever ready with

good

good words of holy Scripture to kil the Devil, and to destroy his power. We must all with an high voice as the Maiden did, acknowledging our sins, and then shall we be delivered from the Devil, and nourished with vertuous exercise.

The Emperor sheweth this Maiden three vessels, that is, God putteth before man life and death, good and evil, any which of these he chosen he shall obtain. Therefore saith Solomon, death and life is set before man, chuse which him list. And yet man is uncertain whether he shall chuse life or death.

By the first Vessel of gold, ful of dead mens bones, is understood mighty worldly richmen, who shine like gold outwardly in riches and pomp of the world, nevertheless within they be full of dead mens bones, that is, the works they have done in this world, be dead in the sight of God through deadly sin. Therefore if any man chuse such a life, he shall have that he deserveth, that is, such men are like unto Tombs, that be white and royally painted and arrayed without, and covered with cloath of gold and silk, and within there is nothing but dry bones.

By the second Vessel of silver, we ought to understand some Justices and wise men of this world, who shine in fair speech, but within they be full of worms and earth, that

is,

is, their fair speech shall avail them no mo[illegible] at the day of Judgement, than the worms [illegible] the Earth, and peradventure less, for th[illegible] shall they suffer everlasting pain, if they [illegible] in deadly sin.

By the third Vessel of Lead, full of G[illegible] and precious stones, we are to understand [illegible] simple and poor life, which the chosen sou[illegible] chuse, that they may be married to our bl[illegible]sed Lord Jesus Christ by humility and ob[illegible]dience, and such men bear with them preci[illegible]ous Stones, that is, Faith, and her fruitf[illegible] works pleasing to God: by which at th[illegible] Judgement day, they be espoused to our Lo[illegible] Jesus Christ, and obtain the Heritage [illegible] Heaven. Unto the which bring us our Sa[illegible]viour Jesus Christ that died on the Cross[illegible] Amen.

The Argument.

Man by Baptisme promised to live in the fea[illegible] of God, and forsake the Devil. Christ sor[illegible]roweth for our sins, he requireth dutiful ser[illegible]vice of us in six several ages, but we are alway[illegible] unready for him, yet the mercy of God is fa[illegible]vourable towards us, that he spareth ove[illegible] till the last age of Man, vouchsaefing if the[illegible] we repent us, and call for Grace, believin[illegible] in his Mercies, to receive us into the Thron[illegible] of his Heavenly Grace.

Th[illegible]

The 33. History.

SOmetime there dwelt in Rome a mighty Emperor named Calipodus, who took a fair Lady to his Wife. They were not long together before that this Empress conceived, and bare him a Son, a goodly Child and a fair. When he was of age, he was set to School, and when he came to twenty years of age; he desired his Fathers heritage, saying: Dear Father, you are an old man, and may not govern your Empire, therefore if it please you to give it me, it shall be to your ease. Then answered the Emperor and said: Dear Son, I dread me for, that when the Empire is in thy power, thou wilt not fulfil my will or my desire.

Then answered the Empress (for so much as she loved her Son better than her husband) and said: My Lord, that cannot be, for thou hast but one Son, therefore I believe he will fulfil thine intent in all things: This Empire may help him well, and therefore it is best to grant him the Empire. Then answered the Emperor and said: I will first have of him a letter Obligatory, that whensoever he doth any thing against my will, that then I will depose him from the Empire, without any contradiction.

The Son granted this, and did make the Obligation, and sealed it. And when this

was

was done, this young Emperor waxed
proud, that he feared neither God nor ma
and did very much harm. But his Fath
suffered it patiently, for he would be corre
ed by no man.

Now at last there fell a great dearth in t
Empire, so that many men dyed for want
food: this old Emperor was al alone himse
and began to have need, wherefore he went
his Son to have some maintenance, whi
his son granted and suffered, for a time. B
within short time his Father began to wa
sick, wherefore he called his Son, and pray
him to give him a draught of his Must. H
Son answered and said: That will I not d
for my Must it is not good for your complexio
Then said the Emperor, I pray thee give me
draught of thy Wine. His Son answered an
said, That he should have none, for my Wine i
not yet fined, and if I touch it, it will trouble
and therefore I will not broach it, till it be clear
ed and fined. Then said his Father, Give m
some of the third Tun. That will I not d
(quoth he) for that Wine is not good for a sick
man. Then's Father pray'd him heartily fo
a draught of the fourth Tun. Then answere
he and said: Therefore get ye none for it i
feeble and without any sustentation, and
such Wine is not good for you, for it is no
comfortable. Then said his Father, now

Son gives me the fifth Can. That will
be, quoth he, for that Can is full of lees and
, and such as is not fit for men, nor scarce
or hogs.

When his father saw he might get nothing
him after he was perfectly well, he went
e King of Jerusalem, and made his com-
int of his Son, and shewed him the Let-
Obligatory, which his Son had made,
reby his Father might put him out of
Empire without any gainsaying. When
King heard this, he called the Emperor
m to answer his Father: And when he
e, he could not answer to his Father with
reason, wherefore the King put him out
his Empire, and seated his Father there-
again: and so he continued all the dayes
his life.

The Moral.

This Emperor betokeneth our Lord Jesus
ist, according to that saying: Is not he
Father that hath brought thee up? he hath
de thee, &c. Deut. 32. 6. The Son be-
meth man, to whom he gave all the Em-
e of this World according to Scripture;
ven he hath given to our Lord, and Earth
Man. Mankind made an Obligation
our Lord Jesus Christ, when he rece-
the Sacrament of Baptisme, wherein he
mised to serve him truely: and for as

the

the Devil and all his pomp and vain glo
This Emperor began to wax sick on a
that is, our Lord Jesus Christ is troubled
oft as a Christian sineth & breaks his C
mandments, wherefore he thirsts greatly
the help of our souls, and he asked a drang
of the first Tun, that is, he asketh of man
first age of his childhood to be spent in
service, but incontinently the wicked ch
answereth and saith, I may not do so, for
childhood is Must, that is, it is tender a
so young, that it may not attempt so soon
serve God: which is manifestly against
truth, for the child of one day is not with
sin. For S. Gregory in his Dialogues sai
The Children of five years of age drive
Spirits from the bosomes of their Fathe
Then when God seth that he cannot h
of the Must, of his Childhood, then he desir
wine of the second Tun. Then answer
the wicked youth, and saith: that his W
is not apt to serve God. And when G
may not have the second Tun, then ask
he of the third Tun, that is, of the third T
of his youth. Then answereth the wick
young man, & saith: The wine is very str
and mighty, and therefore his youth ought
be spent about manly deeds in this world
not in good life, which would make him
and weak. When God seth that he

have of this Tun, Then asked he of the
arth Tun. And then answered the wicked
an in his manhood, and saith that aged man
is feble, and may not fast nor do any hard
epentance, and if he did, he should be the
nis of his own death: Then asked our
rd of the fifth Tun, that is of his old age,
en he stoops, & may not go without a staff.
at the wicked old man repenteth himself, &
th that's Wine is to feble to give to such
feble man, for if he should fast one day, it
re time to morrow to mak's grave. And
n our Lord saith that he may not have of
fifth Tun, then asketh he of the sixth tun,
t so when a man is blind and may go to
no more, yet desireth he of such a man
nk, that is, help of his Soul: But the
tched man lying in despair saith: Alas,
s, woe to me, because I served not al-
hty God my Maker, and Redemer here
times past, while I was in youth and in
sperity: now there is nothing left, but un-
he lees & dregs of wretchedness, therefore
at shall it avail me now to turn toward
d? but for such men we should lament.
nevertheless God is merciful, that though
might have no service of man in all his
e, yet he is content to have the lees of his
n, that is, the good will, though he doth
serve him otherwise, and so shall his good

will

will stand him in stead of godly Life. For what hour the sinner doth repent him of his s from the bottom of his heart, he shall be f given, as Ezekiel witnesseth. But th be many that will give no Wine, nor no ther thing to him, wherefore Christ sh complain to the King of Jerusalem, that is the God-head, at the judgment day, and th as he is God and man, shall he give senten definitive against such men: saying, I ha hungred, and ye gave me no meat, I have be naked, and ye cloathed me not: I have thir ed, and ye gave me no drink. Lo, thus sh he rehearse to thee the fruits of thy Fai And when this is done, then shall such m be put to everlasting pain, and the just m into everlasting bliss. Unto the which bri us, our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

The Argument.

Man being captivated by Satan the, world refuseth to for him, till the God-head of the Heavenly Fath bearing an earnest affection unto him, did esp him, and embrace him within the bosome of inw and entire love, adventuring what he might to se mankind at liberty, yet grudgeth the World that should always serve our God, and forsake her: bu elsewhere all such malignity we are taught in this Hist

The 54. History.

IN Rome dwelt sometime a mighty E peror, Named Anthony, under wh

reign the Rovers of the Sea had taken Prisoner, a mighty mans Son of another Region, and brought him to the Emperors Prison being bound. When this Young-man was thus in Prison he incontinent wrote to his Father for his Ransom but he would neither pay his Ransom, nor send him any thing for to comfort him: This when he heard, he wept sore, and would not be comforted for the unkindness of his Father.

This Emperor had a fair Daughter, which visited every day the Prisoner and comforted him as much as she might, wishing him to be merry. To whom the Prisoner answered and said: How shall I be merry? or how may I joy, thus to lye fast bound in Prison from the sight of man? and notwithstanding this, it grieveth me most that my Father will not pay my Ransom.

When the Maiden heard this, she was moved with pity, and said: Dear Friend, I am sorry for thee, and therefore if thou wilt grant me one thing, I shall deliver thee from thy anguish and pain. What thing is that, (quoth he): That thou wilt take me for thy Wife; then said the Prisoner, I promise you surely to fulfil your request and desire, and for the more assurance I plight you my troth. When he had so done, shortly after the Damsel delivered him out of Prison,

and fled away with him home to his Fathers House.

When his Father saw his Son and the Maiden together, he asked the cause why he brought the Maiden with him? Then said his Son: Sir this Damsel delivered me out of Prison, and therefore she shall be my Wife. Then said his Father, I will not consent that she shall be thy wife for two reasonable causes, which I shall forthwith shew thee.

The first is this it is not unknown to thee, that the Emperor her Father might have had for thy deliverance great plenty of riches, and forasmuch as she was untrue to her own Father, and true to thee, it seemeth well, that thou shouldst not trust long to her: for being false to her own Father, it is to be feared she will not be true to another man.

The second reason is this: the cause why she delivered thee out of Prison, was neither for pity nor for love, but for carnal lust that she had to thee. For at thy deliverance she made covenant with thee to be thy Wife, and had of thee thy troth, and hath accompanied with thee: therefore Son (saith he) it is no reason that she should be thy Wife.

The Maiden answered to these objections and said: As for the first reason that thou layest against me, that I should be untrue to my Father, that is false: For my Father had plen-

plenty of riches, and thy Son is but poor, and therefore I helpt him for pity, and for none other cause; and nevertheless, thou that art his father would not pay his ransom, that he might be delivered out of Prison. Loe, for this cause I have delivered him, therefore I am kinder to him, than thou that art his own father, and he is more beholding to me, than to thee.

Unto the other reason: Whereas thou sayest that I delivered him because of carnal lust: I answer, and say plainly, that it is not truth; for all manner of carnal love is caused of strength and beauty. but thy Son is neither strong nor beautiful, for his imprisonment hath taken away his strength and beauty, for by the pain he hath had in prison, he is brought low, and made unlusty to sport, and therefore pity only moved me to deliver him, and not carnal lust.

Then said the Son: Dear Father, for as much as I was in peril of death, and wrote unto you to pay my ransom, that I might be delivered, and you would not help me, but this gentle Damsel for pity hath saved me from death, and delivered me out of Prison, therefore surely she shall be my Wife. So forthwith he married her with great honour, and with her ended his life.

The Moral.

Dear friends, this Emperor betokeneth the Father of Heaven The young man which was taken with the Pirats of the Sea, betokens all mankind, which was taken with the Devil, by the ſin of our forefather Adam, and was caſt into the Priſon of Hell with great ſorrow and pain. His Father would not ranſom him, that is the world would do nothing for him.

This fair Daughter betokeneth the Godhead, which came down from Heaven, and took manhood of the Virgin Mary, and ſo made a Ghoſtly marriage between him and Man and upon this condition he delivered mankind out of the Priſon of Hell, when he came from Heaven and forſook the fellowſhip of Angels for to dwell with us in this wretched vale of tears But the Father, that betokeneth the World; grudgeth ever againſt him, and would not ſuffer that the Soul of man ſhould become the Sponſe of Jeſus Chriſt, but that ſhe ſhould alway ſerve him, and ſhould forſake our Lord.

Therefore if we follow the world and its vanities, certainly we ſhall fall into the ſnares of the Devil. From the which defend us our bleſſed Saviour Jeſus Chriſt. Amen.

The Argument.

It is the Ordinance of God, that no man shall labour for worldly promotion by covetousness and falshood nor by deceit or other evil courses. Man for his first transgression should have been adjudged to perpetual torment in Hell, had not the Son of God voluntarily offered himself to the death to save mankind, and destroy Satan his Enemy, so that thereby he might live with him in the habitation of Heaven everlastingly.

The 35 History.

SOmetime in Rome there dwelt a noble Emperor of great liberality named Alexander, which above all vertues loved the verse of bounty; wherefore he ordained a Law of great charity, That no man under pain of death should turn a Platter in his dish at his meat, but only eat the white side, and not the black, and if any man would attempt to do the contrary, he should suffer death without any pardon: but yet ere he dyed, he should ask three petitions of the Emperor what him list (except his life) which should be granted him.

It befel after upon a day, that there came an Earl and his Son, of a strange Country, to speak with the Emperor; and when the Earl was set at meat he was served with a Platter, and he which was an hungry and had an appetite to his meat, after he had eaten the white side, he turned the black side, and began to eat

thereof: wherefore straightway he was accused to the Emperor, because he had offended against the Law. Then said the Emperor: Let him dye according to the Law without any delay.

When the Earls Son heard that his Father should dye, immediately he fell down on both his knees before the Emperor, and said O my reverend Lord, I most humbly entreat you, that I may dye for my Father. Then said the Emperor: It pleaseth me well so that one dye for the offence. Then said the Earls Son, sith it is so, that I must dye, I ask the benefit of the Law, that is, that I may have three petitions granted ere I dye. The Emperor answered, and said: Ask what thou wilt, there shall no man say thee nay.

Then said this young Knight: my Lord, you have but one Daughter, the which I desire of your Highness, that she may lye one night with me before I dye. The Emperor granted for fulfilling of the Laws, though it were against his will. Nevertheless this Knight deflowred her not at that night: therefore he greatly pleased the Emperor.

The second Petition is this: I ask all the treasure, & immediately the Emperor granted, because he would not be called a breaker of the Law. And when the Earls Son had received the Emperors treasure, he imparted

it both to poor and to rich, by means whereof he obtained their good wills.

My third Petition is this: I ask my Lord, that all their eyes may be put out incontinent that saw my Father eat the black side of the Plaice. And they that saw him turn the Plaice, bethought them, and said within themselves: If we acknowledg that we saw him do this trespass, then shall our eyes be put out: and therefore it is better that we hold us still; And so there was none found that would accuse him.

When the Earls Son heard this, he said to the Emperor: My Lord (quoth he) ye see there is no man accuseth my Father, therefore give me rightful Judgment. Then said the Emperor: Forasmuch as no man will acknowledg that they saw him turn the Plaice, therefore I will not that thy Father shall die. So thus the Son saved his Fathers life, and after the decease of the Emperor, married his Daughter.

The Moral.

Dear friends, this Emperor betokneth the Father of Heaven, which ordained a Law, that no man should turn the black side of a Plaice; that is, there should no man labour for riches and promotion by covetousness and falshood. The Earl that came to the Emperor betokeneth Adam our fore-Father, who

rame out of the Land of Eden, and turned up the black side of the Plaice, when he eat of the Apple of the forbidden tree; wherefore he should have been condemned to everlasting death; but his Son, that betokeneth our Lord Jesus Christ, he took the flesh of Adam, and proffered himself voluntarily to dye for him: and the Father of Heaven granted that he should go down to dye for mankind

Never beleſs, before he dyed, he asked three petitions of his Father of Heaven; The first was this: That he might have by him his Daughter, which betokeneth the Soul of man, and bring her with him into the bosom of Heaven, according to the words in Hosea, saying. I will wed her to my self.

The second Petion was this: all the Emperors treasure, which betokneth the treasure of Heaven, according to this Scripture, Like as the Father hath disposed for me, so I dispose for you.

The third Petition is this: that all their eyes should be put out, that is, that the Devil and all false witnesses which accuse us true men, might be put from the light of Heavenly Grace.

And thus saved he mankind, and led him up with him unto the Palace of Heaven. Unto the which Palace, bring us our Lord Jesus, Amen.

The

The Argument.

The Father of Heaven of his meer Grace promoteth some poor men, raising them from the dust, to sit among Princes, but they extolling themselves without regard of Gods goodness, they are again made abject by him. The Devil worketh deceit in his members against the godly; Christ came down from Heaven to minister the water of eternal Life unto man, and by his Death and Passion to revive our Souls (which before were dead) unto the firm state of eternal felicity, to purchase happiness with his precious blood.

The 36 History.

IN Rome there dwelt sometime a mighty Emperor, named Leonicius, who on a day rode to a Forrest to disport himself, where he met suddenly with a poor man, to whom he said thus: Friend, what art thou? and whence comest thou?

My Lord (quoth he) I am come from the next City, and I am your man. Then said the Emperor, thou seemest poor, therefore if thou be honest and true, I will promote thee to great riches & honour. Then answered the poor man and said: my Lord, I promise you faithfully to be true to you as long as I live. The Emperor anon made him a Knight, and gave him great riches. When he was thus promoted, he waxed so proud, that he thought himself more able to be an Emperor than his Lord; wherefore he made suggestion to divers

Lords

Lords of that Empire, that he might usur
and take upon him through strength of them
to be Emperor.

When the Emperor heard this, anon he ex
iled him, and all those that were consenting
to him, so they lived abjects in great wretch
edness and sorrow: and then the Empero
ordained other men in their stead, and gav
them all the possessions of these Traitors.

And when the banished men heard tha
strangers had taken possession of their Land
and Goods, anon they conspired against them
and through treason requested them to a ban
quet. And they as innocents thinking upo
no such treason, came at the day assigned, an
were served with five poysoned messes, where
by as many as tasted of those dishes, died in
continent.

When the Emperor heard this, he wa
greatly moved, and assembled his counsel t
inquire what was best to be done for th
treason, and for their death. Then said th
Emperors Son: My Lord, I am your Son
and you are my Father, and therefore I sha
give you good counsel profitable to all men
Not far hence is a little Nation, where
dwelleth a Fair Maiden, and a gracious
the sight of every man, which hath an Orchar
wherein is a well, the water whereof is of suc
vertue, that if it be cast upon a dead man
straigh

straightway he shall live again & recover his life. Therefore my Lord, I shall descend unto that Nation, & seek that water, whereby they that were slain at the Banquet, may be restored again to life. And when the Emperor heard this, he greatly rejoiced, and said thus: Son, thy counsel is good.

And straightway the Emperors Son went into the said Nation and fell in conceit with the Maiden, insomuch that he entred into the Garden, and assailed to take the water of the Well. And when he had so done, he made five deep trenches in the ground, in the which the water ran till it came where the dead men lay buried, hereupon when the water touched them, they arose from death to life. Then the Emperors Son with great joy led them unto his Father: And when the Emperor saw this, he was right joyful: wherefore he crowned his Son with a Laurel Crown in token of victory, and so ended his life in rest and peace.

The Moral.

Dear friends, this Emperor betokeneth the Father of Heaven. The poor man that was promoted, betokeneth Lucifer, that was exalted of nought, and enthroned in the Empire of Heaven with great joy and clearness, but through his pride he thought he might be like unto the Almighty God, and not only like him,

him, but more than Almighty God; wherefore the Father of Heaven exiled him, and all them that conſented to him, to Hell: and in his place man was exalted to great joy and honour. The Devil ſeeing this, it much grieved him, that man ſhould come to ſuch Glory and Honour, and bade Adam and Eve to a Banquet, when they did eat of the Apple againſt Gods Commandment, and counſelled them thus, ſaying, In what hour ye eat of this Apple, ye ſhall be like Gods, knowing good and evil. And at this curſed Banquet, they were ſerved with five Meſſes that were poyſoned, that is, their five Wits were accorded in eating of the Apple, whereof man was infected and dyed. This hearing, the Emperors Son, Chriſt Jeſus, moved with mercy, he came down from Heaven into this world, and acquainted him ſo well with the bleſſed Virgin Mary, that he found in her the Well of manhood, and conjoined it to the Godhead, according to the Scripture: I am the Well of Life, who drinketh of me ſhall not thirſt. After that, he ſuffered to be made five trenches in the ground, that is, five wounds in his body, out of the which ran both blood and water, whereby all mankind was raiſed from death to life, and led them up into the Palace of Heaven, unto the which bring us our bleſſed Saviour Jeſus Chriſt. Amen.

The

The Argument.

The father of heaven extendeth his goodness divers ways towards frail man, yet he taketh contrary ways, living in spiritual fornication, for the which being exiled from the state of felicity, he is compelled to lead a miserable and painful life. But being reconciled by the death of his Saviour, he possesseth the heritage of heavenly felicity.

The 37. History.

SOmetime in Rome there raigned a mighty Emperor named Dunstanus, in whose Empire there dwelt a gentle Knight that had two Sons. One of his Sons matched himself against his Fathers will with a common Harlot. The Knight hearing this, exiled his Son from him; and when he was thus exiled, he begat on this woman a Son: and soon after that he waxed sick, and in penury; wherefore he sent Messengers to his Father, beseeching him of his Mercy: this hearing his Father, he took compassion and ruth on him, wherefore he was reclaimed from banishment; and when he was thus brought again to his Fathers grace, he gave his child which he had by the comman woman to his Father, who kindly received him and nourished him as his Son.

When the other Son heard this, he said to his Father: Father, quoth he, it seemeth

me

me that you are out of your right mind, which I will prove by good reason. For he is out of his right mind that receiveth a false Heir and nourisheth him, whose Father hath ever damaged and grieved him before. Now my brother which begat this Child, hath done you great injury, when he married the Common Woman, against your will and commandment, therefore methinketh that you are out of your right mind.

Then answered his Father, and said; because thy brother is reconciled to me, thou art envious, and thou art unkind to thy own brother, willing to put him from thy fellowship for evermore, but soothly, no unkind man shall have Heritage except he be reconciled and yet thou never reconciledst thy self to him, for thy unkindness, for thou mightest have reconciled thy self to him, but thou wouldst not, therefore of my Heritage getest thou no part.

The Moral.

Dear Friends, the Father of these two brethren, betokeneth the Father of Heaven. And his two Sons betoken the nature of Angels, and the nature of Man: For man was married to a common woman, or Harlot, when he eat the Apple against the Commandment of God, wherefore he was exiled by the Father of Heaven, and put from the joys of Paradise

paradise. The Son of the common woman betokeneth mankind. This Knights Son, that is Adam, lived in great misery, for after his sin, he was put from joy into this wretched valley of tears and weeping, according to the scripture, In the sweat of thy brows, thou shall eat thy bread. But after, by the passion of Christ he was reconciled. But the other Son, that betokeneth the Devil, was ever unkind, and grudged daily against our reconciling, saying: that by reason of sin he ought not to come unto the Heritage of heaven. Unto the which bring us our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

The Argument.

We ought in every vocation and calling to behave ourselves justly, and to use the poor man with equity: we must not injure rich men. The mighty men are to be honored, and not defrauded of their dignity and estate, being men of sincere life: they that do contrary to the meaning of dutiful behoof herein, are worthy of everlasting death.

The 38 History.

SOmetime there dwelt in Rome a mighty Emperor named Donatus, which did make three Images, of the which one held out his hand straight unto the people, and had on his finger a ring of Gold. The second Image had a beard of Gold. And the third had a Mantle of Gold. Commanding upon pain of death, that

that no man should take away from these Images, the King, the Beard, nor the Mantle.

It befell afterward upon a time, that one Dionyse a tyrant, came into the Temple and took away the King from the first Image the Beard from the second, and the Mantle from the third. And when he had thus done he was forthwith accused unto the Emperor and brought before him, and strictly examined of that trespass, why he dispoiled the Images against the Emperors commandment.

Then answered Dionyse, and said as followeth: My reverend Lord it is lawful to answer for my self When I entred into the Temple, the first Image held forth his hand straight to me, as who would say, I give thee this King, and therefore I took the King as the gift of the Image being lothe to refuse so gentle an offer. And when I saw the second Image having a Beard, I thought thus with my self: I knew sometime the Father of the Image, which had no Beard and now his Son hath a Beard which is against reason, the Son to have a Beard, and the Father none; and therefore I took from him his Beard, that he should be like his Father. After that, when I saw the third having a Mantle of gold I thought that the Mantle

go

old was not behoval for him in Winter? for gold is naturally cold, which might be cause of his death, and therefore I took it from him, because it was too cold in Winter, and too hot in Summer.

When Dionyse had excused him by these reasons, the Emperor answered and said: Thou hast answered wickedly for thy self: What should cause thee rather than any other man to dispoil the Images, for as much as I commanded that no man should take any thing away from them; therefore thine own mouth hath condemned thee. Anon the Emperor called to him one of his Squires, and charged him to smite off his head, and incontinently he took him, and did unto him as the Emperor had commanded, and so he died a shameful death.

The Moral.

Dear Friends, this Emperor betokeneth Almighty God the Father of Heaven. The three Images betokeneth the poor men, the rich men, and the mighty men of this world. The tyrant Dyonise betokeneth all Officers in every estate, lewdly behaving themselves, which take away from poor men as Ringloft their fingers, and say thus: I may take that is given me: For when the poor man hath ought to do, he must needs put forth his hand to give whether he will

or no, if he would speed. They take away the Beard from the rich man, and say thus: This man is richer than his Father was, therefore take we his livelyhood from him, and make him like his Fore-father. They take also the Mantle of Gold from the mighty man: when they see any man of honour and good living, willing to correct such open mis-doers, then say they, this man is too cold, for he inclineth nothing to our opinions, and also he is too hot in power and working against us, therefore go we and take from him the Mantle of might, and so they accuse him, and put him out of his Office. But certainly all such men stand in peril of everlasting death: From the which save us he that shed his precious blood for us. Amen.

The Argument.

Man ought to nourish Christ in his heart, by Faith, and fruits of good Life: The reward of such as have care unto the Commandments and Institutions of God. We must watch lest we fall into temptation: These things considered, we shall then by God's gracious good Providence, attain unto the reward of Heavenly and Everlasting Bliss.

The 39 History.

THere dwelt sometime in Rome a mighty Emperor, named Emilius, who had a fair young Lady to his Wife, upon whom he had begotten a fair Son. When the States of the Empire heard this, they came to the Emperor and besought him to have the keeping of his Son. Immediately the Emperor sent a Herauld throughout the City, proclaiming, that in whose House were first found fire and water, the good man of that House should have his Son in keeping, and to nourish. Anon, then the Emperor made a Proclamation, that whosoever had his Son to keep, should nourish him cleanly, and feed him with wholesome meats, and drinks. And when the Child came to Age, then should the Keeper be promoted to great honour: Wherefore many men made ready fire and water, in hope to have the Child: But in the night, when every man was asleep, there came a Tyrant, named Sulapius, that quenched the fire, and threw out the water. Nevertheless, among all other, there was a man, named Jonathas, that laboured diligently, that he kept both day and night fire and water.

In the morning early, the Herauld at the

Emperors commandment, went through the City, and sought in every House for fire and water, but he could find none till he came to Jonathas House, where he found both fire and water ready, wherefore he was brought before the Emperor, who delivered him his Son according to the Proclamation.

When Jonathas had the Emperors Son, he led him home unto his House: And soon after he sent for Masons and Carpenters, and did make a strong Chamber of lime and stone And when the Chamber was finished, he sent for Painters to paint on the wall of the Chamber, ten Images, with this Posie painted above their heads, Whoso defileth these Images shall die a cruel death. And then caused a pair of Gallows to be drawn on the door, and figured a man hanging thereupon, with this posie painted above his head, So shall he be served that nourisheth the Emperors Son amiss. Also he caused a Chair of Gold to be made, and himself sitting therein crowned with a crown of Gold, with this superscription above the head: Who soul nourisheth the Emperors Son cleanly, thus shall he be honoured.

When this was done, oftentimes as he was asleep, he was greatly tempted to defile these ten excellent Images: but anon he

ad the superscriptions above their heads, nd then all the temptations ceased. And hen the Emperors Son was evilly kept, hen he went to the Gallows, and read that osie which was written above his own ead, and for dread thereof kept the Child etter, and was diligent to give attendance n him.

And when he beheld the chair, and himself sitting therein crowned with a Crown of old, he was right joyful, thinking to have ood reward for keeping of the Emperors on. When the Emperor heard of this diligent demeanor about his Son, he sent for im, and thanking him for his well keeping nd nourishing of him, he after promoted him great honour and dignity.

The Moral.

This Emperor betokeneth the Father of eaven, the Empress betokeneth the blessed irgin Mary; The Emperors Son betokeneth our Lord Jesus Christ; The Herald that was sent throughout the City, betokeneth Saint John Baptist, who was ent before our Lord to prepare the way before him, according to the holy Scripture: Ecce I send mine Angel before me, &c. The Gates that desired the Emperors Son to

nourish, betokens the Patriarchs and Prophets, which desire greatly to nourish our Lord Jesus Christ, and also to see him but they might not see him nor nourish him for fire and water, which should have been cause of their sight, was not with them perfectly.

The fire betokeneth the Holy Ghost, which had not yet appeared to them, for they were not washed with the water of Baptism. Also, ye may understand by the fire, perfect Charity, and by the water true Contrition which do now adays fail in many men, and therefore they may not have the little Child Jesus in their hearts.

Jonathas that watched so diligently, betokeneth every good Christian man, which studieth either to watch in well doing, yielding to God for sins, the fire of charitable Repentance, and the water of Contrition But oftentimes the Tyrant, which betokeneth the Devil, putteth out the fire of Charity out of mens hearts, and casteth on the water of Contrition, so that they may not nourish the little Child Jesus. Therefore let us watch as Jonathas did, that we enter not into temptation. And call we unto Masons, that is, discreet Preachers which can make in our hearts a Chamber of stone, that is, a sure Faith and Hope

Then call we to us Painters, that is, Miniſters of Gods Word, which can Paint in our hearts ten Images, that is, the Ten Commandments, which if thou keep and obſerve daily, without doubt thou ſhalt be honoured in Heaven.

And if thou keep well the Emperors Son, thou ſhalt ſit in a Chair of Gold, Crowned with a Crown of Gold. And if that thou nourish him not well, without doubt thou ſhalt be in danger of torment in Hell. From the which preſerve us our bleſſed Saviour Jeſus.

The Argument.

The Soul of man eſpouſed unto Chriſt, the Fleſh procureth the ſame to ſin. The Chriſtian Soul by Faith, withſtandeth temptation. The Redemption of mankind from Sin and Death. The deceits of unthankful hearts. The Spirits health, the defects of the Fleſh. After a pure Repentance followeth perpetual Joy and Felicity both of Soul and Body.

The 40 Hiſtory.

IN Rome dwelt ſometime a mighty Emperor, named Manelay, which had wedded the Kings Daughter of Hungaria, a fair Lady, and gracious in all her works, eſpecially ſhe was Merciful. On a time, as the Em-

peroz lay in his bed he bethought him that he would go visit the Holy Land. And on the morrow he called to him the Empress his Wife, and his own only Brother, and thus he said: Dear Lady, I may not nor will not hide from you the privities of my heart: I purpose to visit the Holy Land, wherefore I ordain thee principally to be Lady and Governess over all my Empire, and all my people; and under thee I ordain here my Brother to be thy Steward for to provide all things that may be profitable to my Empire and my people.

Then said the Empress: sith it will no otherwise be, but that needs thou wilt go to visit the City of Jerusalem, I shall be in your absence as true as any Turtle that hath lost her Mate; for as I believe, ye shall not escape thence with your life.

The Emperor anon comforts her with fair words, and kissed her, and after that took his leave of her and all other, and went toward the City of Jerusalem.

And anon after the Emperor was gone his Brother became so proud, that he oppressed poor men, and robbed rich men: and he did worse than this; for he daily stirred the Empress to commit sin with him; But she ever answered again as an holy and devout woman, and said; I will (quoth she) never consent

consent to you nor to any other as long as my Lord liveth, nevertheless this Knight would not leave with this answer, but ever when he found her alone, he made his complaint to her, and stirred her by all the ways that he could to sin with him.

When this Lady saw that he would not cease for any answer, nor would not amend himself: when she saw her time, she called to her three or four of the worthiest men of the Empire, and said to them thus: It is not unknown to you, that my Lord the Emperor ordained me principal Governour of this Empire, and also he ordained his Brother to be Steward under me, and that he should do nothing without my Counsel, but he doth all the contrary: for he oppresseth greatly poor men, and likewise robbeth the rich men: and yet he would do more than this if he might have his intent; wherefore I command you in my Lords name, that you bind him fast, and cast him into Prison.

Then said they, soothly he hath done many evil deeds since our Lord the Emperor went, therefore we be ready to obey your Commandments, but in this matter you must answer for us to the Lord our Emperor.

Then said she: Dread ye not, if my Lord knew

knew what he had done as well as I, he would put him to the ſouleſt death that could be thought: Immediately theſe men laid hands on him, and bound him faſt with Iron Chains, and put him in Priſon, whereas he lay long time after, till at the laſt, it fortuned, there came tydings that the Emperor was coming home, and had obtained great renown and victory. When his Brother heard of his coming, he ſaid, would to God my Brother might not find me in Priſon: for if he do, he will inquire the cauſe of my impriſonment of the Empreſs, and ſhe will tell him all the truth, how I moved her to commit ſin, and ſo for her I ſhall have no favour of my Brother, but loſe my life, this know I well: therefore it ſhall not be ſo. Then ſent he a Meſſenger unto the Empreſs praying her that ſhe would vouchſafe to come to the Priſon-door, that he might ſpeak a word or two with her.

The Empreſs came to him, and enquired of him, what he would have. He anſwered, and ſaid: O Lady, have mercy upon me, for if the Emperor my Brother find me in Priſon, then ſhall I dye without any remedy.

Then ſaid the Empreſs: if I might know that thou wouldſt be a good man, and leave thy folly, thou ſhouldſt find grace. Then did

did he promise her assuredly to be true, and to amend all his Trespass. When he had thus promised, the Empress delivered him anon, and made him to be bathed and shaven, and apparelled him worthily according to his state, and then she said unto him thus: Now good Brother take thy Steed, and come with me, that we may meet my Lord. He answered, and said: Lady, I am ready to fulfil your will and commandment in all things; and then the Empress took him with her, and many other Knights, and so rode forth to meet the Emperor: and as they rode together by the way, they saw a great Hart run before them, wherefore every man with such Hounds as they had, chased him on Horseback, so that with the Empress was left no creature, save only the Emperors Brother, who seeing that no man was there but they two, thus he said unto the Empress: Lo Lady, here is beside a private Forest. and long it is ago that I spake to thee of love, come now and consent unto me, that I may lie with thee.

Then said the Empress: Ah fool, what may this be? Yesterday I delivered thee out of prison upon thy promise in hope of amendment, and now thou art returned to thy folly again; wherefore I say now unto thee, as I have said before, there shall no man do such

a thing

thing with me, save only my Lord the Emperor, which ought of very duty for to do. Then said he, if thou wilt not consent to me, I shall hang thee here upon a tree in this Forrest, where no man shall find thee, and so shalt thou die an evil death. The Empress answered meekly, and said, Though thou smite off my head, or put me to death with all manner of torments, thou shalt never have my consent to such a sin.

When he heard this, he unclothed her all save her smock, and hanged her up by the hair upon a tree, and tyed her Steed before her, and so rode to his Fellows, and told them that a great Host of men met him, and took the Empress away from him, and when he had told them this, they made all great sorrow.

It befel on the third day after, there came an Earl to hunt in that Forrest, and as he rode beating the bushes, he unkennels a Fox, whom his Hounds followed fast till they came near the tree where the Empress hanged. And when the Dogs smelt the savour of her, they left the Fox, and ran towards the tree as fast as they could.

The Earl seeing this, wondred greatly, and spurring his horse, followed them till he came where the Empress hanged. When the Earl saw

saw her thus hanging, he marvelled greatly, for as much as she was right fair and beautiful to behold; wherefore he said unto her in this manner wise: O Woman who art thou? and of what Country? and wherefore hangest thou here in this manner.

The Empress that was not yet fully dead, but at point ready to die, answered and said, I am quoth she, a strange woman, and am come out of a far Country, but how I came hither God knoweth. Then answered the Earl and said, whose Horse is this that standeth by thee bound to this tree? Then answered the Lady and said, that it was hers. When the Earl heard this, he saw well that she was a Gentlewoman and come of noble linage, wherefore he was the rather moved with pity, and said unto her: O fair Lady, thou seemest of gentle blood, and therefore I purpose to deliver thee from this mischef, if thou wilt promise to go with me, and nourish my fair young Daughter, and teach her at home in my Castle, for I have no child but only her, and if thou kèp her well thou shalt have a good reward for thy labour. Then said she: As far forth as I can or may, I shall fulfil your intent. And when she had thus promised him, he took her down off the tree, and led her home to his Castle, and gave her the keeping of his

Daugh

Daughter, that he loved ſo much, and ſhe was cheriſhed ſo well, that ſhe lay every night in the Earls Chamber, and his Daughter with her: and in the Chamber every night there burned a Lamp, which hanged between the Empreſſes bed and the Earls bed. This Lady behaved her ſelf ſo gently, that ſhe was beloved of every creature. There was at that time in the Earls Houſe a Steward, which much loved this Empreſs, and often ſpake to her of his love. But ſhe anſwered him again, and ſaid: Know ye, dear friend, for a certainty, that I will never love any man in ſuch manner wiſe, but only him whom I am greatly bound to love by Gods Commandment.

Then ſaid the Steward: Then thou will not conſent unto me? Sir, quoth ſhe, what need you any more to ask ſuch things? The Vow that I have made, I will truly kæp, and hold by the Grace of God.

And when the Steward heard this, he went his way in great wrath and anger, thinking within himſelf, if I may, I ſhall be revenged on thee.

It befell upon a night within ſhort time after, that the Earls Chamber doar was forgotten and left unſhut, which the Steward had anon perceived: And when they were all aſleep, he went and ſpyed by the light of

the Lamp where the Empress and the young Maiden lay together, and with that he drew out his Knife, and cutting the throat of the Earls Daughter, and put the Knife into the Empresses hand she being asleep, and nothing knowing thereof, to the intent, that when the Earl awaked, he should think that she had cut his daughters throat, and so would she be put to a shameful death for his mischievous deed. And when the Damsel was thus slain, and the bloody Knife in the Empresses hand, the Countess awaked out of her sleep, and saw by the light of the Lamp, the bloody Knife in the Empresses hand, wherefore she was almost out of her wits, and said to the Earl: O my Lord, behold in yonder Ladies hand a wonderful thing.

The Earl awaked, and looked toward the Empresses bed, and saw the bloody Knife, as the Countess had said: wherefore he was greatly moved, and cryed to her, and said: awake woman out of thy sleep, what thing is this that I see in thy hand: Then the Empress through his cry awaked out of her sleep, and in her waking the Knife fell out of her hand, and with that she looked by her, and found the Earls Daughter dead by her side, and all the bed besprinkled with blood, wherefore with an high voice she cryed, and said: Alas, alas, and woe is me, my Lords Daughter is slain.

Then

Then cried the Countess unto the Earl with a pitious voice, and said, O my Lord let this Devilish woman be put to the foulest death that can be thought, which thus hath slain our only Child.

Then when the Countess had said thus to the Earl, he said to the Empress in this wise, The high God knoweth that thou mischievous woman hast slain my Daughter with thine own hands, for I saw the bloody knife in thy hand, and therefore thou shalt die a foul death. Then said the Earl in this wise: O thou woman, were it not, I dread God greatly, I should cleave thy body with my Sword in two parts, for I delivered thee from hanging, and now thou hast slain my Daughter: nevertheless for me thou shalt have no harm, therefore go thy way out of this City, without any delay, for if I find thee here after this day, thou shalt die a most cruel death.

Then arose this woful Empress, and did on her clothes, and after leapt on her Palfey, and rode toward the East alone without any safe conduct; and as she rode thus mourning by the way, she espied on the left side of the way a pair of Gallows, and seven Officers leading a man to be hanged, wherefore she was moved with great pity and smote her Horse with her stick, and rode

to them, praying them she might redeem that misdoer if he might be saved from death by any means.

Then said they, Lady, it pleaseth us well that you redeem him. Anon the Empress accorded with them, and payed his Ransom, and he was delivered.

Then said she to him: Now my good friend be true unto me till thou dye, sith I have delivered thee from death.

On my soul (quoth he) I promise you ever to be true. And when he had thus said, he followed the Lady still, till they came nigh a City, and then said the Empress to him: good friend quoth she, go with thy way afore me into the City, and see thou take up for us an honest lodging, for there I purpose to rest a while. Her man went forth as she commanded, and took up her a good lodging, and an honest, where she abode a long time. When the men of the City perceived her beauty, they wondred greatly, wherefore many of them craved of her unlawful love, but all was in vain, for they might not speed in any wise.

It fortuned after upon a day, that there came a Ship full of Merchandise, and arrived in the Haven of that City. When the Lady heard this, she said unto her Servant:

Go to the ſhip, and ſee if there be any cloath for my uſe.

Her ſervant went forth to the ſhip, whereas he found many very fine cloathes: wherefore he prayed the Maſter of the Ship, that he would come into the City and ſpeak with his Lady. The Maſter granted him, and ſo the ſervant came home to his Lady before, and warned her of the coming of the Maſter of the Ship. Soon after the Maſter of the Ship came and ſaluted her courteouſly: and the Lady received him according to his degree, praying him that ſhe might have for her money ſuch cloath as might be profitable for her wearing. Then he granted that ſhe ſhould have any thing that liked her, and ſoon they were agreed, wherefore the Servant went immediately again with the Maſter of the ſhip for the cloath. And when they were both within on Ship-board, the Maſter ſaid to the Ladies ſervant: My dear friend, to thee I would open my mind, if I might truſt to thee, and if thou help me, thou ſhalt have of me a great Reward.

Then anſwered he and ſaid: I ſhall (quoth he) be ſworn to thee to keep thy counſel and fulfil thine intent as far forth as I can.

Then ſaid the Maſter of the Ship, I love thy Lady more than I can tell thee, for her beauty and feature is ſo excellent

that

at I would give for the love of her, all
he gold that I have: and if I may ob-
ain the love of her through thy help, I
ill give thee whatsoever thou wilt desire of
ne.

Then said the Ladies servant: tell me by
hat means I may best help thee. Then
aid the Master of the Ship, go home to thy
Lady again, and tell her, that I will not de-
iver to thee the cloath except she come her
elf; and do thou but bring her to my Ship,
nd if the Wind be good and fit, then I
urpose to lead her away. Thy counsel is
ood, quoth the Ladies Servant, therefore
ive me some reward, and I shall fulfil thy
esire.

Now when he had received his reward, he
ent again to the Lady and told her, that
y no means the Master of the Ship would
eliver him the Cloath, except she came her
elf.

The Lady believed her Servant, and went
o the Ship. Now when she was within
he Ship-board, her Servant abode with-
ut.

When the Master saw that she was within
he Ship, and the wind was good, he drew up
he Sail, and saileth forth.

When the Lady perceived this, thus she
aid to the Master: O Master (quoth she)

what reason is this that thou hast done to me? The Master answered and said: Madam, certainly it is so, that I must needs lie with thee, and afterward espouse thee. O good Sir quoth she I have made a vow, that I shall never do such a thing but with him unto whom I am bound by right, and by the Law. Sawbly quoth he, if you will not grant me with your good will I will cast you out into the midst of the Sea, and there shall ye die an evil death; if it be so quoth she, that I must needs consent, or else dye, first I pray thee to prepare a private place in the end of the ship, whereas I may fulfil thine intent ere I dye; and also I pray thee, that I may say my Prayers unto the Father of Heaven, that he may have mercy on me.

The Master believed her, wherefore he did ordain her a Cabbin in the end of the ship. Wherein she kneeled down on both her knées and made her prayers, saying on this wise: O thou my Lord God thou hast kept me from my youth in cleanness, keep me now that I be not defloured, so that I may ever serve thee with a clean heart and mind, and let not this wicked man prevail with me, nor any other the like wickedness come nigh me. When she had ended her prayers, there arose

suddenly

suddenly a great tempest in the Sea, so that the ship all brast, and all that were therein perished save the Lady, and she caught a Table and saved her self, and the Master caught a board of the Ship, and saved himself likewise; nevertheless she knew not of him, nor he of her, for they were driven to divers coasts. The Lady landed in her own Empire near to a rich City, wherein she was honourably received, and she lived so holy a life that God gave her grace and power to heal sick folk of all manner of diseases, wherefore there came much people to her, both crooked, blind, and lame, and every man through the grace of God, and her good endeavour was healed wherefore her name was known through divers Regions. Nevertheless she was not known as the Empress. At the same time the Emperors Brother (that had hanged her before by the Hair) was smitten with a foul Leprosie. The Knight that slew the Earls Daughter, and put the bloody knife in her hand was blind, deaf, and had the Palsie. The Thief that betrayed her to the Master of the ship was lame and full of the cramp. And the Master of the ship distraught of his wits.

When the Emperor heard that so holy a woman was in the City, he called his brother, and said to him thus: Go we, dear

brother, unto this holy woman that is dwelling in this City, that she may heal thee of thy Leprosie. Would to God, O noble Brother (quoth he) that I were healed. Anon the Emperor with his brother went toward the City. Then when the Citizens heard of his coming, they received him honourably with procession and all provision fitting his estate. And then the Emperor enquired of the Citizens, if any such holy woman were among them, that could heal sick folk of their diseases. The Citizens answered, and said, that such an one there was. Now at the same time, was come to the same City, the Knight which slew the Earls Daughter, and the Thief which she saved from the Gallows, and the Master of the Ship to be healed of their diseases.

Then was the Empress called forth before the Emperor, but she muffled her face as well as she could, that the Emperor her Husband should not know her, and when she had so done, she saluted him with great reverence, as appertained to his state, and again he in like manner, saying thus: O good Lady, if thou list of thy kindness to heal my brother of his Leprosie, ask of me what you will, and I shall grant it thee for thy reward.

When the Empress heard this, she looked

about

about her, and saw there the Emperors brother a foul Leper; she saw there also the Knight that slew the Earls Daughter, blind and deaf, the Thief that she saved from the Gallows Lame, and also the Master of the Ship distraught out of his wits, and all were come to her to be healed of their maladies, & knew her not; but though they knew her not, she knew them well. Then said she unto the Emperor thus: My reverend Lord, though you would give me all your Empire, I cannot heal your brother, nor none of these other, except they acknowledg openly what great evil they have done.

When the Emperor heard this, he turned him towards his brother, and said unto him; Brother, acknowledg openly thy Sin, before all these men, that thou mayest be healed of thy sickness. Then anon he began to tell how he had led his life, but he told not how he had hanged the Empress in the Forest by the hair of the head most despightfully.

When he had acknowledged all that him list, the Empresse replied and said: Sothly my Lord, I would gladly lay unto him my medicine, but I wot right well it is in vain, for he hath not made a full confession.

The Emperor hearing this, he turned

towards his Brother, and said in this wise: what evil, sorrow, or other unhappy wretchedness is in thee? seest thou not how that thou art a foul Leper? therefore acknowledg thy sin truly, that thou mayest be whole, or else avoid my company for evermore.

Ah my Lord, quoth he, I may not tell my life openly, except I be sure of thy grace. What hast thou trespassed against me, said the Emperor? Then answered his brother, and said: Mine offence against thee is grievous, and therefore I ask thee heartily forgiveness. The Emperor thought not on the Empress, forasmuch as he supposed she had been dead many years before, therefore he commanded his brother to tell forth wherein he had offended him, and he should be forgiven.

When the Emperor had thus forgiven his brother, he began to tell openly how he had desired the Empress to commit Adultery with him, and because she denied, he had hanged her by the hair in the Forest on such a day.

When the Emperor heard this, he was almost beside himself, and in his rage he said thus: O thou wretched creature, the vengeance of God is fallen upon thee, and were it not that I have pardoned thee, thou shouldest dye the most shameful death that could be thought.

Then

Then said the Knight that slew the Earls Daughter, I wot not quoth he, what Lady you mean, but I wot that my Lord found on a time such a Lady hanging in the Forrest, and brought her home to his Castle, and he took her, and gave her his Daughter to keep, and I provoked her as much as I could to sin with me, but she would in no wise consent to me, wherefore I slew the Earls Daughter that lay with her, and when I had so done, I put the bloody knife in the Ladies hand, that the Earl should think that she had slain his daughter with her own hand, and then was she exiled thence, but where she became I wot not.

Then said the Thief; I wot not of what Lady ye mean; but well I wot, that seven Officers were leading me to the Gallows, and such a Lady came riding by, and bought me of them, and then went I with her, and afterwards I betrayed her unto the Master of the Ship.

Such a Lady quoth the Master of the ship received I, and when we were in the middest of the Sea, I would have lain with her, but she knæled down to her prayers, and anon there arose such a tempest, that the ship all to brast, and all therein was drowned save she and I, but afterward what befell of her, I wot not.

Then

Then cried the Empress with a loud voice, and said: Soothly dear friends, ye do now truly confess and declare the truth, wherefore I will now apply my medicine and anon they received their healths.

When the Lady the Empresse had thus done, she uncovered her face to the Emperor, and he forthwith knew her, and ran to her, and embraced her in his arms, and kissed her oftentimes, and for joy he wept bitterly: saying, Blessed be God, now I have found that I desired. And when he had thus said, he led her home to the palace with great joy; and after, when it pleased Almighty God, they ended both their lives in peace and rest.

The Moral.

Dear Friends, this Emperor betokeneth our Lord Jesus Christ. This Empress betokeneth a holy soul: This Emperors brother betokeneth the flesh, to whom our Lord hath given charge of the Empire, but most principally to the soul; Nevertheless, the wretched flesh oft provoketh the Soul to sin, but the Soul that loveth God above all things, withstandeth that temptation, calleth to her ghostly power, that is, Reason, Will, Understanding, and Conscience, and maketh them

them to imprison the flesh, that is disobedient to the Soul, in the Prison of true repentance unto the time it obey Reason in all things.

And thus in hope of mercy he sinneth again: to whom the holy Writer saith, Cursed be the man that sinneth in hope. And at the last the soul inclineth to the flesh, and letteth him out of the prison of Repentance and washeth him from the filth of sin, and arrayeth him with good vertues, and maketh him leap on the Palfray of charitable humility, and so rideth forth to meet our Lord with the sacrifice of thanksgiving. But alas, oft the sinner trespasseth against holy Scripture, wherefore the Hart, that is, the lust of the flesh, ariseth before him, and after runneth great hounds, that is, evil thoughts, and so long they chase, till the body and the soul be left alone, and then the flesh stirreth that pure soul, being the Spouse to Almighty God: but the pure and undefiled soul, that is so well beloved with God, will not forsake our Lord, and consent to Sin: wherefore the wretched Flesh full oft despoileth her of her cloathing, that is, of her vertues, and hangeth her up by the hair on an Oak, that is, on lusts, and delights, and there she hangeth till the good Earl cometh, that is, a discreet Preacher in the Forest of this world,

no

to preach and teach the Word of God: then he taketh her down, and leadeth her forth to the Church, to nourish his Daughter, that is, to nourish Conscience with fruitful faith. The Earl had in his Chamber a Lamp: right so every discreet Preacher should have before him the Lamp of holy Scripture, whereby he may see both the grievance and profit of the Soul in learning vertues, and putting away of vice. The Steward that stirreth her to sin, is nought else but the pride of life, which is Steward of this world; by whom many men are deceived. But when the Soul that is so well beloved with Christ, will not consent unto the sin of pride, then taketh this evil Steward the Knife of Covetise, wherewith he slayeth the Earls Daughter, that is, Conscience, according to the Scripture, saying: Gold and Silver hath blinded the eyes of Judges, and hath overthrown wise men, so that equity and righteousness might not enter, but stood afar, and turned their backs. This Lady also redeemed a man from death; that is from everlasting death which he hath deserved by deadly sin: Therefore do we as this Lady, smite we our horse, that is, our flesh, with the spurs of repentance, and so ride we forth in all haste to save our neighbor from the sink of deadly sin, to help him both bodily and ghostly, as Solomon saith.

Wo

Wo to that man that lyeth in deadly sin, that hath no man to lift him out thereof. Therefore awake thy Neighbour and help. For a Brother that is holpen of another, is like a sure City, and if he give but a Cup of cold water in the way of help, he shall not lose his Reward.

But many now adays be very unkind, as was the Thief which deceived the Lady, after that she had saved him from hanging.

The Master of the ship betokeneth the World, by whom many men be deceived. But nevertheless, as oft as a man taketh on him voluntarily the Commandments of God, and forsaketh the World, then breaketh he the ship. For it is impossible to please God and man, and the world, all at one time.

When this Lady had escaped the tempest of the Sea, she went to a City, that is, the Soul after the troubles of this world, went to the holy life, and there she healed all manner of sick folk, that is, every man that is troubled in his soul, that is infected with divers sicknesses, those that his Lady healed through holy life. But they could not be healed till they had first confessed their sins to the Empresse, the Church of God, and then she healeth them by repentance and amendment of

of life: yet all this while was the Empreſs unknown to her Husband, that is, the Church wandreth in the wilderneſs of this wicked world, until God by miraculous means made her known unto him, and ſo led her home by victory and triumph in the truth, unto the heavenly habitation of eternal reſt and glory: Unto the which Almighty God bring us all for his Sons ſake. Amen.

The Argument.

Every ſupream Magiſtrate aud other inferior, out, to be honoured and reverenced. Every true Chriſtian ought to conſider his duty herein, and every falſe Chriſtian perverting the ways of the godly: reward for ſuch is laid up in Hell, but the juſt ſhall inherit the bleſſed life everlaſting.

The 40 Hiſtory.

IN Rome ſometime dwelt a mighty Emperor named Martin, which for entire affection kept with him his brothers ſon, whom men called Fulgentius. With this Martin dwelt alſo a Knight that was Steward of the Empire, and Unkle unto the Emperor, which envied this Fulgentius, ſtudying day and night how he might bring the Emperor and this youth at debate. Wherefore the Steward on a day went to the Emperor, and ſaid

said my Lord, quoth he, I that am your true servant, am bound in duty to warn your Highness, if I hear any thing that toucheth your Honour, wherefore I have such things that I must needs utter it in secret to your Majesty between us two: Then said the Emperor, good frisnd, say on what thee list.

My most dear Lord (quoth the Steward) Fulgentius your Cousin and your nigh kinsman, hath defamed you wonderfully and shamefully throughout all your Empire, saying that your breath stinketh, and that it is death to him to serve your Cup. Then the Emperor was grievously displeased, and almost beside himself for anger, and said unto him thus: I pray thee good friend tell me the very truth if that my breath stinketh as he saith My Lord (quoth the Steward) ye may believe me, I never perceived a sweeter breath in my days than yours is. Then said the Emperor: I pray thee good friend, tell me how I may bring this thing to good proof.

The Steward answered and said: My Lord (quoth he) ye shall right well understand the truth, for to morrow next when he serveth you of your cup, ye shall see that he will turn away his face from you, because of your breath, and this is the most certain proof that may

be

he had of this thing. Verily quoth the Emperor, a truer proof cannot be had of this thing. Therefore anon when the Steward heard this, he went straight to Fulgentius, and took him aside saying thus: Dear friend, thou art near Kinsman and also Nephew unto my Lord the Emperor therefore if thou wilt be thankful unto me, I will tell thee of a fault whereof my Lord the Emperor complaineth oft, and thinks to put thee from him (except it be the sooner amended) and that will be a great reproof to thee Then said this Fulgentius: Ah good Sir, for his love that dyed upon the Cross, tell me why my Lord is so sore moved with me, for I am ready to amend my fault in all that I can or may, and for to be ruled by your discreet counsel

Thy breath (quoth the Steward) stinketh so sore, that his drink doth him no good, so grievous unto him is the stinking breath of thy mouth Then said Fulgentius unto the Steward: Truly, that perceived I never till now; but what think ye of my breath, I pray you tell me the very truth? Truly (quoth the Steward) it stinketh greatly and foul: And this Fulgentius believed all that he had said, and was right sorrowful in his mind, & prayed the Steward of his counsel and help in this woful case. Then said the Steward unto him,

if

if that thou wilt do my counsel, I shall bring this matter to a good conclusion, wherefore do as I shall tell thee.

I counsel thee for the best, and also warn thee, that when thou servest my Lord the Emperor of his cup, that thou turn thy Face away from him, so that he may not smell thy stinking breath, until the time that thou hast provided thee of some remedy therefore.

Then was Fulgentius right glad, and sware to him that he would do by his counsel.

Not long after it befel, that this young man Fulgentius served his Lord as he was wont to do, and therewith suddenly he turned his face from the Lord the Emperor, as the Steward had taught him.

And when the Emperor perceived the avoiding of his head, he smote this young Fulgentius on the breast with his foot, and said to him thus: O thou lewd Harlet; now I see well it is true that I have heard of thee, and therefore go thou anon out of my sight, that I may see thee no more in this place. And with that this young Fulgentius wept full sore, and avoided the place, and went out of his sight.

And when this was done, the Emperor called unto him his Steward, and said, How may I rid this Harlet from the World, that thus hath defamed me? My most dear Lord,

quoth the Steward, right well you shall have your intent.

For here beside, within this three miles, ye have brick-makers, which daily make great fire, for to burn Brick, and also they make Lime, therefore my Lord, send to them this night, charge them upon pain of death, that whosoever cometh to them first in the morning, saying to them thus: My Lord commandeth them to fulfill his will: that they take him and cast him into the Furnace, and burn him: and this night command you this Fulgentius, that he go early in the morning to your workmen, and that he ask them, whether they have fulfilled your will which they were commanded, or not; and then shall they (according to your Commandment) cast him into the fire, and thus shall he die an evil death.

Surely (quoth the Emperor) thy counsel is good, therefore call to me that Varlet Fulgentius. And when the young man was come to the Emperors presence, he said to him thus: I charge thee upon pain of death, that thou rise early in the morning, and go to the burners of Lime and Brick, and that thou be with them early before the Sun rise, three miles from this house, and charge them in my behalf that they fulfil my Commandment, or else they shall die a most shameful death.

Then

Then spake this Fulgentius: My Lord, God send me my life I shall fulfil your will. ere it that I go to the worlds end.

When Fulgentius had this charge, he could t sleep for thought, that he must rise early to lfil his Lords commandment. The Em- ror about midnight sent a Messenger on pleback unto his Brick-makers, command- g that upon pain of death, that whoso- er came to them first in the morning, say- g unto them (as is before rehearsed) they ould take him and bind him, and cast him to the fire, and burn him to the bare bones. The Brick-makers answered and said, it ould be done. Then the Messenger returnes me again, and told the Emperor that hi- mmandment should be diligently fulfil d.

Early in the morning following, Fulgen- s arose and prepared him toward his way, nd as he went he heard a Bell ring to Ser- ice, wherefore he went to hear Service, and fter the end of Service he fell asleep, and ere slept a long while so soundly, that the rest nor none other might awake him.

The Steward desiring inwardly to hear of s death, about two of the clock he went un- the workmen, and said unto them thus: irs (quoth he) have ye done the Emperors ommandment or no?

The Brick-makers answered him, and said: No truly, we have not yet done his Commandment, but it shall be done, and with that they laid hands on him. Then cried the Steward, and said, Good Sirs save my life, for the Emperor commanded that Fulgentius should be put to death. Then said they, the Messenger told us not so, but he bade us, that whosoever came first in the morning, saying as you have said, that we should take him, and cast him into the Furnace, and burn him to ashes: and with that they threw him into the fire.

And when he was burnt, Fulgentius came to them, and said: Good Sirs, have you done my Lords Commandment, yea, soothly said they, and therefore go ye again to the Emperor, and tell him so. Then said Fulgentius, For Christs love tell me that commandment.

We had in commandment said they, upon pain of death, that whosoever came to us first in the morning, and said like as thou hast said, that we should take him and cast him into the Furnace: But before thee, came the Steward, and therefore have we fulfilled on him the Emperors commandment, now he is burnt to the bare bones.

When Fulgentius heard this, he thanked God, that he had so preserved him from death; there-

herefore he took his leave of the workmen, nd went again to the Palace.

When the Emperor saw him, he was al- most distract of his wits for anger, and thus e said: Hast thou been with the Brick-ma- ers, and fulfilled my commandment? Sooth- y my gracious Lord I have been there, but re I came there, your commandment was ulfilled: How may that be true quoth the Emperor.

Forsooth said Fulgentius, the Steward ame to them afore me, and said that I should ave said, so they took him and threw him in- o the Furnace, and if I had come any rather, o would they have done to me, and therefore I thank God, that he hath preserved me rom death.

Then said the Emperor, tell me the truth f such questions as I shall demand of thee. Then said Fulgentius to the Emperor: you ever found me in any falshood, and therefore I greatly wonder why ye have ordained such death for me? For well ye know, that I m your own brothers Son. Then said the Emperor to Fulgentius: It is no wonder, for hat death I ordained for thee through coun- el of the Steward, because thou didst defame me throughout all my Empire, saying: that y breath did stink so grievously, that it was eath to thee, and in token thereof thou

turnedst away thy face when thou servedst me of my Cup, and that I saw with mine eyes; and for this cause I ordained for thee such a death; and yet thou shalt dye, except I hear a better excuse.

Then answered Fulgentius, and said: Ah dear Lord, if it might please your Highness for to hear me, I shall shew you a subtil and deceitful imagination. Say on quoth the Emperor.

The Steward (quoth Fulgentius) that is now dead, came to me and said, that ye told unto him that my breath did stink, and thereupon he counselled me, that when I served you of your Cup, I should turn away my face, I take God to witness I lye not.

When the Emperor heard this, he believed him, and said: O my Nephew, now I see, through the right wise judgment of God, the Steward is burnt, and his own wickedness and envy is fallen on himself, for he ordained this malice against thee, and therefore thou art much bound to Almighty God that hath preserved thee from death.

The Moral.

Dear Friends, this Emperor betokeneth every supream Magistrate, and Fulgentius his Nephew betokeneth every true Christian

man,

man, which should truly serve them with faithful loyalty, like as Fulgentius served the Emperor at his cup, wherefore he shall be greatly loved of God. This Steward betokeneth every false Christian man, as Cain, which oftentimes turned the heart of right wise men from God, saying, that his breath stinketh; that is, that the life of this Magistrate is not acceptable to God or man, which is against the Scripture, which saith, Judg not, and ye shall not be Judged. But oftentimes such malicious people accuse righteous men, wherefore they shall be cast into the everlasting fire of Hell, where is wailing & weeping, and misery without end. But the righteous shall ascend to everlasting life. Unto the which bring us, our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

The Argument.

Tyrants and ungodly persons walk without knowledg of the Truth, till they come to the Church of God; the wicked persecute the Godly, but as they are preserved by the mighty providence of God, so they ought not to sleep in sin. A figurative speech of three several meanings, viz. Take, Yield, and Flee: the signification therefore.

The 42. History.

THere dwelt sometime in Rome a mighty Emperour, named Delphinus, which had

no Children ſave only a Daughter which was a fair creature, and well-beloved of her Father.

As this Emperor rode on a day on Hunting in the Forreſt, ſuddenly he rode out of his way, and loſt his men, wherefore he was greatly diſcomfited, for he wiſt not whither he rode, nor in what place he was; till at the laſt when he had thus ridden all the day alone, in the evening he ſaw a Houſe, and thither he rode a great pace, ane knocked at the Gate: immediately the good man of the houſe heard him, and asked the cauſe of his knocking, and what he would have? Dear friend quoth the Emperor, lo it is night, as ye may ſee? Therefore I deſire of you a lodging for the Love of God.

When he had thus ſaid, the good man of the Houſe, unawares that he was the Emperor anſwered and ſaid: Good friend (quoth he) I am the Emperors Forſter, and have plenty of Venſon, and other victual for you: When the Emperor heard this, he was right glad in his mind, nevertheleſs, he told him not that he was the Emperor. Then the Forſter opened the Gate, and received him as he could, and ſet him to ſupper, and ſerved him worthily. And when he had ſupped, the Forſter brought him to his Chamber, and when time was he went to bed.

In

In the same night it befel, that the Fosters Wife did travel of a child in another Chamber hard by, and was delivered the same night of a goodly Son. And as the Emperor lay in his bed sleeping, him seemed he heard a voice saying to him thrice these words: Take, take, take; And with that he awake, and marvelled greatly what it might be, saying to himself thus: A voice biddeth me Take, take, take, What shall I take? And immediately he fell asleep again.

And the second time he heard a voice saying unto him these words, Yeild, yeild, yeild. And with that he awakened again, and wondered greatly, saying unto himself: What may this signifie? First I heard a voice that said, Take, take, take, and nothing I received: and right now I heard another voice that said, Yeild, yeild, yeild; What should I yeild.

And as he lay thus thinking with himself, he fell asleep again. And then he heard the third voice, saying these words thrice: Flee flee, flee, For this night is a Child born, that after thy decease shall be Emperor. When the Emperor heard this, he awakened, and wondered greatly what it might be.

In the morning following, the Emperor called to him the Fosser, and said: Dear friend I pray thee tell me, if any child be born here about

about this night to thy knowledg. My Wife quoth the Foster, this night is delivered of a Son. I pray thee, said the Emperour, shew me thy Son. When the Emperour had seen the Child, he saw a mark in the Childs visage, whereby he might know him another time: and he said to the Foster, thus:

Dear friend, knowest thou who I am? Nay soothly, quoth the Foster, for I never saw you before this time, as far as I can remember, nevertheless it seemeth that ye be a Gentleman. Then answered the Emperor and said: I am the Emperor your Lord, whom you have lodged this night: Wherefore I give thee hearty thanks. This hearing the Foster, he fell down upon both his knees, at his feet, and besought him of Mercy, if that he had offended his Highness in any thing. Then answered the Emperor, and said: Be thou nothing afraid, for I thank thee heartily for thy good chear, and thy Son that was born to night, I will have to bring up in my Court, and shortly I will send for him.

O my gracious Lord quoth the Foster, it is not that such a noble Emperor should nourish the Child of his Subject and Servant: nevertheless your will be fulfilled, and when your Messengers come, I shall deliver them my Son.

Then the Emperor took his leave, and rode home

home to his Palace. And shortly after he was come home, he called unto him such servants as he trusted best, and said unto them thus: Go ye unto my Foster, with whom I was lodged such a night in the Forest, and receive of him his Son, of which his wife was delivered that night, and upon pain of death, I command you, that you slay him by the way, and cast his flesh to the Dogs, but bring with you the heart to me: and except ye fulfil my commandment, ye shall dye the cruellest death that can be thought. Anon his Servants went to the Forest, and received the Fosters Son, and brought him with them, and when they were come near unto the Palace, one of them said: How shall we do that we may fulfil our Lords commandment in slaying of this child? Some answered and said, that the child should be slain, and some would have his life saved, & while they were thus striving among themselves, one of them that was most merciful, said unto the rest: O my good loving friends, hear my counsel, I beseech you, and ye shall not repent you thereof. If we murder this innocent child, we shall greatly offend Almighty God: And behold here by are young Pigs, kill we one of them, and then we may take with us his heart, and present it unto the Emperor, saying, that it is the heart of ỹ young Child. Then said they, thy counsel is good, but

but what ſhall we do with the Child: Good friend (quoth he) let us [illegible] it in ſome cloathes, and lay him in ſome hollow tree, for peradventure God will help him, and ſave his life.

When he had thus ſaid, they did after his counſel in all things, and killed a Pig and went their way, and carried home with them the Pigs heart to the Emperor, ſaying unto him thus: Lo gracious Lord, we have deſtroyed the Child, as ye commanded us, and with that they ſhewed him the Pigs heart. The Emperor ſuppoſing it had been the Childs heart, took it, and caſt it into the fire deſpightfully, ſaying: Lo, there is the heart of him which ſhould have been Emperor after me; Lo, what it is to believe in dreams, which be but fantaſies & vain things.

The ſame day after the Child was put into the hollow tree, there came an Earl to hunt in the Foreſt, and as his Hounds chaſed an Hart, they came to the hollow tree, where the child lay, and when they ſmelt the ſavour of the Child, they would go no further. The Earl ſeeing this, marvelled why his Hounds abode there, and ſmote his Horſe with his ſpurs, he rode a great pace till he came unto them. And when he came unto the Tree wherein the Child was laid, he looked in at a hole, and ſaw there the Child lying, and

then

then he was [redacted] glad, and took the Child up in his arms [redacted] lovingly, and bare it home to his Castle, saying unto the Countess his Wife: Lo my dear wife, this day by fortune I have found a very fair Child in a hollow tree as I hunted in the Forest, whereof I am [redacted] glad: And because thou never yet conceivedst a Child, therefore I exhort thee that thou wilt faign thy self to travail with Child, and say that thou hast born this Child; the Countess fulfilled gladly the Earls desire, and said: My most dear Lord, your will in this thing shall be done.

Not long after, this news went throughout all the Country, that the Countess was delivered of a fair Son, wherefore every man rejoiced much.

The Child began to grow, and was well beloved of every man, and especially of the Earl and the Countess. It befell when the Child was fifteen years of age, the Emperor made a solemn feast unto all the Lords of his Empire, unto the which feast this Earl was called, who at the day assigned came, and brought his Son with him, which was at that time a fair young Squire, and he carved at the board before the Earl. The Emperor stedfastly beheld him, and espyed the token in his forehead, which he had seen in the Fosters House, wherewith he was greatly moved

with-

within himself, and said unto the Earl in this manner. Whose Son is this? Certes, said the Earl, he is my Son. Then said the Emperor, By the Faith that thou owest to me, tell me the truth.

The Earl seeing that he might not excuse himself, but that needs he must tell him the truth, told how he found him in a hollow Tree. This hearing the Emperor, he was distract of his wits for anger, and called to him his Servants, which he had sent before to destroy the Child. And when they came before him, he made them to swear that they should tell him the truth what they had done with the Child.

Gracious Lord said they, we yeild us unto your Grace and goodness, for pity so moved us, that we might not destroy him, but we put him in a hollow Tree: what befel of him afterward, certainly we know not, and in his stead we killed a Pig, and brought the heart thereof unto you.

When the Emperor heard the truth of the matter, he said unto the Earl: This young man (quoth he) shall abide with me. The Earl immediately granted, though it was greatly against his will.

When the Feast was ended, every man took his leave of the Emperor, and went whereas they list. And at that time it fortuned,

ned, that the Empress and her Daughter sojourned in another Country far from thence by the Commandment of the Emperor.

Not long after the Emperor said unto this young Squire, it behoveth thee to ride unto the Empress my Wife with my Letters. I am ready at your Commandment my Lord, said he, to fulfill your desire. Immediately the Emperor wrote Letters, the intent whereof was this: that the Empress should take the bearer of these Letters, and let him be drawn at the Horse tail, and after that she should let him be hanged till he be dead, and that on pain of death. When the Letters were all sealed, the Emperor gave them unto the young Squire, commanding him to speed him on his journy. And straightway the young Squire put them close into a box, and rode forth on his journey. When he had ridden three or four days on his journey, in an evening he came unto a Castle where dwelt a Knight, and gently desired of him a nights lodging.

The Knight beholding the sweet favour of the young Squire, made him good cheer, and afterward brought him into his Chamber, and when he was there, he went to bed, and immediately fell asleep, for he was full weary of his journey, and forgot his box with the Letters lying openly in his Chamber.

When the Knight saw the box, he opened

it

it, and found the Letters sealed with the Emperors sign Mannal, and was greatly tempted to open them, and at the last he opened them neatly, and then read how the Empress upon pain of death should put the bearer of them to death; and then he was right sorrowful, and said within himself: Alas (quoth he) it is great pity to slay so fair and proper a man, and immediately after, the Knight raced out that writing, & wrote in the same place, these words following: Upon pain of death, I command thee, that thou take this young Squire, bearer of these Letters, and let him be wedded without any delay unto my Daughter and yours, with all Honour and Solemnity that can be thought; and when they be married, that ye make as much account of him, as if he were your own Son, and that he supply my room till I come unto you my self.

When the Knight had thus written, he closed the Letters neatly, and put them into the box again. Early in the morning the young Squire arose, and hastily made ready, and took his leave of the Knight and rode forth on his journey, and the third day after he came unto the Empress, and saluted her dutifully in the Emperors behalf, and gave her the Letters. When the Empress had read them, anon she sent forth her Messengers through the Countrey, commanding

manding the States and Gentlemen to come unto her Daughters wedding on a day assigned.

When the day was come, thither came many great Lords and Ladies, and anon the young Squire espoused the Emperors daughter with great honour, according to the tenor of the Letters, and was much honoured among the people.

Not long after it befel, that the Emperor came into the country and when the Empress heard of his coming, she took with her her Son in Law, with much other people, and went to welcome the Emperor. When the Emperor saw this young Squire leading the Lady his wife, he was greatly moved within himself, and said: O thou cursed woman, because thou hast not fulfilled my commandment thou shalt dye an evil death.

O my dear Lord (quoth she) all that you commanded me to do I have fulfilled. Nay cursed woman said the Emperor, it is not so, for I wrote to thee that thou should put him to death, and yet he is alive. My Lord, quoth the Empress, you wrote to me that I should give him your Daughter to Wife, and that on pain of death, in witness whereof, lo here your letters sealed with your own Seal Manual.

When the Emperor saw this, he wondred

greatly and said, Is he then espoused to my daughter? Yea surely said the Empress, long ago with great solemnity, and as I perceive your daughter is with child. Then said the Emperor: O Lord Jesus, it is great folly to strive against thine ordinance, therefore sith it is so, thy will must needs be fulfilled. And with that he took his Son in Law in his arms and kissed him, which after his death was Emperor, and ended his life in rest and peace.

The Moral.

This Emperor may betoken Herod, who would have slain the Child Jesus, wherefore he sent Messengers to seek him; according to the Scripture, shewing how he commanded three Kings to seek him, & bring him tidings again where he was, that he might come and worship him also. The Foster betokeneth Joseph our Ladies Husband, which kept him: but when the three Kings came they slew him not, but worshipped him on their knees, and left him in the hollow tree of his Godhead. The Earl that found this Child, betokeneth the Holy Ghost which warned Joseph by the Angel in his sleep, that he should take our Lady and her Son and flee into Egypt.

By the first take may be understood the great benefit that he gave thee, when he gave thee

thed a soul made to his own similitude. By the second take is understood the Son of God, which was born of the Blessed Virgin Mary. By the third take is understood the same Son of God which died upon the Cross.

By the first yeild is understood, that we ought to yeild our soul unto Almighty God, as clean as he gave us it after our regeneration in Baptism. By the second yeild, that we ought to yeild honour, worship, and love unto Almighty God, and man. By the third yeild, that we ought to yeild to God true confession of faith, contrition of heart, and amendment of life.

The first flee betokeneth sin, which we should flee: the second flee betokeneth the world, which we should flee, for the great temptations that are therein. The third flee betokeneth everlasting pain, the which we ought to flee through faith, by the which we may come to everlasting bliss: unto the which bring us our Lord Jesus. Amen.

The Argument.

The soul of man being ravished by the Tyranny of sin, she complaineth unto Christ, which heareth her. The Tyrant is overcome by Christ, who espouseth her unto him, preparing a place of perpetual joy for her. Christ receiveth patient sinners to his mercy by his death and passion.

The 43 Hiſtory.

THere dwelt ſometime in Rome a mighty Emperor, named Sontaſious, which ordained a Law, that whoſoever Raviſhed a Virgin ſhould die, and if ſhe were reſcued, then he that reſcued her, ſhould have her to wife, if him liſt: and if he would not marry her, then ſhe ſhould be eſpouſed by his appointment. It befel on a day, that a Tyrant named Ponclanus, led a Virgin into a Foreſt and defloured her of her Maiden-head. And when he had ſo done, he would have ſlain her, and as he was deſpoiling her of her Clothes, there came riding by the Foreſt a Gentle Knight, which heard the lamenting of the Damſel, wherefore he rode a great pace into the Foreſt to ſeek what it might be. Now when he came, he ſaw a woman ſtanding all naked, ſave only her ſmock, to whom the Knight ſpake? Art thou ſhe (ſaid he) that cried ſo lamentably: Then anſwered the Damſel: Yea certainly, for this man that ſtandeth here hath raviſhed and defloured me of my Maiden-head, and now he would ſlay me, & therefore he hath deſpoiled me of my clothes: for the love of God gentle Knight help me now. Then ſaid the Tyrant, ſhe lieth, for ſhe is my wife, and I have found her in Adultery with another

another man, therefore I will slay her. Then said the Knight, I believe better the woman than thee, for loe the tokens appear openly in her visage, that thou hast ravished her, therefore will I fight with thee for her deliverance. And immediately they buckled both together and fought eagerly till they were both sore wounded. Nevertheless, the Knight obtained the Victory, and put the Tyrant to flight.

Then said the Knight unto the Woman: Lo, I have suffered for thy love many sore Wounds, and have saved thee from Death, wilt thou therefore promise to be my Wife; thereto I assent (quoth she) with all my heart, and thereupon I plight thee my troth. When they were thus ensured, then said the Knight as followeth.

Here beside is my Castle, go thither, and abide there till I have provided all things needful for our wedding for I purpose to make a great feast thereat. My Lord (quoth she) I am ready to fulfil your will: Then went she unto the Castle whereat she was worthily receiv'd: and the Knight went unto his friends for to bid them to the Marriage. In the mean while came Poncianus the Tyrant to the Knights Castle, and prayed her that he might speak with her. Then came she down from the Castle to him, and this Tyrant subtilly

flattered her, and said: Gentle love, if it please you to consent to me. I shall give you both silver, and gold, and great riches, and I shall be your servant, and ye my Soveraign. When the Woman heard this, full lightly she was deceived through his flattering language, and soon granted him to be his Wife, and took him to her in the Castle.

Not long after the Knight came home and found the Castle gate shut, and knocked thereat, but long it was ere he might have answer. At the last the woman came and demanded why he knocked at the gate Then said he to her: O sweet Lady, why hast thou so soon changed thy love? let me come in. Nay surely, said she, thou shalt not come in here, for I have here with me my old love, which I loved before, remember quoth the Knight thou gavest me thy troth to be my wife and how I saved thee from death, and if thou ponder not thy faith, behold my wounds which I have suffered in my body for thy love. And so he unclothed himself naked all save his hosen, that he might shew his wounds openly. But she would not see them, nor speak more with him, but shut fast the gate and went her way. Now when the Knight saw this, he went to the Judg, and made his complaint to him, praying him to give him right judgment on the Tyrant and the Woman.

Then

Then the Judg called them both before him, and when they were come, the Knight said thus: my Lord, I ask the benefit of the Law which is this: If a man rescue a woman from ravishing, the rescuer shall marry her if him list, and this woman I relivered from the hands of the Tyrant, therefore I ought to have her to my wife: and furthermore she gave her faith and troth to marry with me and thereupon we went to my castle, and I have been at great cost against our wedding, and therefore as it seemeth to me, she is my Wife by the law

Then said the Judg to the Tyrant, thou knowest well that this Knight delivered her from thy hand, and for her love hath suffered grievous wounds, and therefore well thou wottest that she is his wife by the Law if that him list. But after her deliverance with flattering speech thou hast deceived her, therefore I judg thee to be hanged.

Then said the Judg to the Woman, likewise: O Woman, thou knowest how this knight saved thee from death, and thereupon thou betrothest him thy faith and troth to be his Wife, first by the Law and after by faith and troth: this notwithstanding, thou consentest afterward to the Tyrant & broughtest him into the Knights Castle, and didst shut the gate against the Knight, and would not

ſee his wounds which he ſuffered for thy love, and therefore I judg thee to be hanged alſo. And ſo it was done, both the Raviſher and ſhe that was raviſhed, were condemned to death, wherefore every man praiſed the Judg for his wiſe judgment.

The Moral.

This Emperor betoketh the Father of heaven which ordained a Law, that if the ſoul of man were raviſhed from God, by ſin, the Saviour of the ſoul ſhould eſpouſe her if him liſt. The woman that was raviſhed betokeneth the ſoul of man, which was raviſhed by the ſin of our fore-father Adam, and led out of Paradiſe into the Foreſt of this wretched world by the Tyrant Poncianus, which betokeneth the Devil and he not only defiled her, loſing the heritage of Heaven, but alſo he would ſlay her with everlaſting pain. But the Soul crieth with an high voice, whoſe cry our Lord Jeſus Chriſt heard. This cry was made when Adam cried after the oyl of mercy: And the Patriarks and Prophets cried for remedy, ſaying theſe words: O thou higheſt in the Eaſt viſit thou us, &c.

The Knight betokeneth our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, which came from Heaven, and fought with the Tyrant, that is the Devil, and both they

they were sore wounded; for our Lord Jesus Christ was wounded in the flesh, and the Devil maimed in his Kingdom: Wherefore the woman, that is, the soul gave her faith and troth unto Christ Jesus, when she became a Christian, saying these words; I forsake the Devil and all his Pride, and believe in God the Father Almighty. Then ordained our Lord Jesus Christ a Marriage between him and her with the two special Sacraments of Baptism, and the Lords Supper, whereof may be made a strong Castle against the Devil. Also our Lord commanded the soul to keep her still in the Castle of Virtue, till he went to provide that was needful: that is, our Lord Jesus Christ ascended to Heaven to prepare for her a dwelling place of everlasting joy, whereas she should dwell after the day of judgment with our Lord God in honour and glory.

But alas in the mean time came the Devil, and beguiled the wretched soul by deadly sin, and so entred into the Castle of our heart, which should be the Castle of God. The Knight Jesus knocked at the gate of our heart according to the Scripture, Lo I stand at the door and knock, if any man will open that I may enter. But where the Devil is, God doth never enter, except the sinner will receive him by repentance, which seeing our Lord hanging upon the Cross, that we may

see

see his bloody wounds which he suffered for us; we sinners should be the rather mindful of his love: For from the crown of his head to the sole of his feet was left no whole place; therefore saith the Prophet Esay, Behold and see if any sorrow be like to my sorrow. Therefore he is a wretched man that will not be converted unto his Lord God, but lye still in deadly sin. wherefore when he is called before the high judg, he shall be condemned to everlasting death. Therefore study we to open the doors of our hearts by fruitful faith in Almighty God and then without doubt we shall obtain everlasting life. Unto which bring us our Lord Jesus, Amen.

The Argument.

The Body and Soul of man being made by Gods grace the Temple of the holy Ghost, do give themselves to serve and please God in this life, and to love God and their Neighbours according to his laws; and though the body by death suffer mortal affliction for a time, yet by faith, hope, and charity in Jesus Christ, both body and soul shall inherit life and joy everlasting.

The 44 History.

IT is read of a certain Roman Emperor which erecting for himself a goodly Monument

ment or Tomb, as the Labourers digged in the ground of his palace they found a Coffin of gold bound about with three hoops, and upon the Hoops was engraven these words, I have spent, I have given, I have kept: I have had, I now have lost, I am punished. That which I had I spent, that which I gave I have. When the Emperor saw this, he called together his Nobles and States, and said unto them: My Lords, go and consider among your selves what this inscription meaneth, unto whom the nobles shortly after returned this short answer, saying, the meaning of this inscription is no other but this: There was a certain Emperor your Predecessor, which desired to leave behind him an example to others, that they might follow him in good life and conversation, viz. I have spent my life in judging others righteously, and governing my self according to the rule of reason; I have given to my souldiers things necessary, unto pay maintenance and living, and to every one as to my self, according to their deserts. I have kept in all my works, righteousness, mercy to them that need it, and to workmen their worthy wages; I have had a liberal and a constant heart to every one that serveth me: I have given riches in their necessity, & loving favour at all times. I have had a band to tame and subdue enemies, to protect and

defend

before friends, to puniſh offenders. I have loſt, fooliſhneſs, the friendſhip of enemies, and luſt, or laſcivioufneſs of the fleſh. I am puniſhed, now by death, becauſe I believed not as I ought to have done, in one God eternal. I am puniſhed, I ſay alas, becauſe I cannot redeem my ſelf but by the merits of Chriſt Jeſus the Saviour of the world. When the Emperor aforeſaid heard the meaning of the inſcriptions wiſely interpreted on this manner, and how long that deceaſed Emperor had lived, he thereby governed himſelf and his Subjects more providentially, and ended his life in Gods peace, with much honour.

The Moral.

Dear friends, this Emperor may be called every good Chriſtian man or woman, which ought, and is bound to erect and re-edifie a Tomb, that is, his heart prepared unto God, that he may perform his will above all things: and ſo diggeth in the ground of his heart by contrition and ſorrowful repentance for his ſins, that he doth find a golden Coffin, that is, a body dead to ſin, but his ſoul garniſhed with virtues by Gods grace granted to the ſame, and bound about with three golden Hoops, viz. with Faith, Hope, and Charity. What then was engraven in the ſame three Hoops? Firſt, I have ſpent: where it may be asked, what

what hast thou spent? the good Christian answereth, body and soul in the service of God: if any of you bestow this temporal life in, he shall be assured of great reward even of life everlasting. The second inscription is, I have kept: what hast thou kept? The good Christian answereth, a contrite and humble heart, and prepared unto God, to do whatsoever his good pleasure was. The third inscription is, I have given: what hast thou given? The good Christian answereth: Love unto God with all my heart, with all my soul, and with all my mind: and love unto my neighbour, according to the commandment of God. The fourth inscription is, I have had: what hast thou had? The good Christian answereth and saith, surely a wretched life, because I was conceived in sin, and born in iniquity, and also was formed of vile and base matter. Fifthly, what is the inscription, I now have? The good Christian answereth by Baptism and thereby am made the Souldier of Christ by Virtues which God gave me in my Baptism: whereas before I was the bondslave of Satan. Sixthly, what is that inscription, I have lost? To this answereth the good Christian, surely the favour of God by mine own deserts: yet all the sins which I have committed against God, I have by repentance corrected and amended; because repen-

repentance is one mean, but Chriſts merits chiefly & eſpecially cleanſeth us from all ſin. Seventhly, what is that inſcription, I am puniſhed? The good Chriſtian anſwereth and ſaith, Becauſe I am afflicted by death for the offences and ſins of my life. Eighthly, what is that inſcription, I have ſpent which I had? To this anſwereth the good Chriſtian saying, I have beſtowed all my life time here in works of mercy, by the grace which I received of my Lord Jeſus Chriſt. Ninthly, what is that inſcription, That which I gave I have, ſurely in all my temporal life I gave all my counſel, whole aſſent and will which I had to be the ſervant of God, and now it is in the good will and pleaſure of God, that I ſhall remain with him in joys of everlaſting life in Heaven: unto the which bring us all. Amen.

FINIS.

Stibbs · 23/1/51

[illegible]

[illegible] Christian [illegible]

[illegible] I am [illegible] by [illegible]

[illegible] of my life. Eighthly,

what is that inscription, I have [illegible]

I [illegible] To this answereth the good Christian

saying, I have [illegible] all my life time here

in [illegible] of mercy, by the grace which I re-

ceived of my Lord Jesus Christ. Ninthly,

what is that inscription. That which [illegible]

I have, [illegible] all my temporal life [illegible]

[illegible] whole [illegible] and will [illegible]

[illegible] the [illegible] of God, and now [illegible]

[illegible] and pleasure of God. [illegible]

[illegible] with him in love [illegible]

[illegible] unto the [illegible]

[illegible]

Of 24/1/51